1:Marshall E-5 (1952-1953) 1959 FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

in the pouches of their karosses along with their babies. This puts a strict limit upon any desire to possess great quantities of property in movables. Furthermore, gift-giving keeps all personal property moving in a current through the region and no one possesses very much more than another. The determining factors in obtaining more than one wife are apt to be the personalities of the individuals and the man's ability to hunt. 'Women love meat', we were told, and like their husbands to be good hunters.

The number of wives a man may have is not regulated by social rules but by his ability to obtain and support them. This limits him usually to one. None of the nine polygynists in the band had more than two. However, we heard of a man named Gao, now dead, who had had four wives all at one time. He had been a fabulous hunter and maker of arrows and was the father of the /Ti/kay who is the husband of two sisters, /Naoka and /Nai, in Band 9.

Only two of the nine pairs of co-wives had traceable consanguineous relationship. The above /Ti/kay's wives were sisters—the only ones—and, in Band 10, Old ≠Gao's younger wife, /Ghia, was the BrDa of his older wife, Bau.

/Kwi, sister, is the term which co-wives apply to each other, unless they have the same name, in which case they term each other */gu/na*. The /Kung, though they do not institutionalize the sororate, say it is a good idea to marry sisters because they are not so likely to be jealous of each other as other women. /Ti/kay's wives, who appeared to live in harmony and affection and to support each other, provided an example of the validity of this opinion.

Marriage to the same man gives co-wives the joking relationship, and they do not observe the sitting or the name avoidance, though they may have avoided each other before marriage.

/Kung co-wives share one scherm and one family fire. The scherm, the little shelter of branches and grass which the women build, a half hemisphere in shape, is only 3 to 4 ft. wide on the open side, about 3 ft. deep at the centre, perhaps 4 to 5 ft. high at the peak. In it and in front of it, beside their one fire, the two wives live, share their man, share the food they gather, share the work of fetching water and wood, nurse each other's babies, and co-operate in whatever degree of harmony their spirits can attain.

Husbands and wives may sleep separately or lie close together, side by side, or feet to feet. The woman holds her infant in her arms. Young children sleep near by bundled together, two or three in one kaross. Girls at about seven or eight go to sleep with a grandmother or a widowed friend or relative. The boys of the band, beginning at the same age, all sleep at a boys' fire.

/Ti/kay (Band 9), husband of the two attractive sisters, sees to it that his wives lie close to him, especially on cold nights, one on each side. Sleeping thus they were like the three stars of Orion which we call the Belt, but which the /Kung say are three zebras, two females with a male between them.

It is under such conditions that the /Kung usually have sexual intercourse—at night, in their sleeping place. They cover themselves with their karosses and are very discreet. The position is to lie on the side, the man at the back of the woman. Men pull the labia of the women before intercourse. The wives of /Ti/kay told me that they took pleasure in intercourse. I asked them if they had orgasms. We had

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585 then come with us when we leave tomorrow to gather *tsi*. He will hunt from that
[159] place and get us some meat.'
[183] The ritual elements in the wedding ceremony, in so far as we observed, were as follows: (1) carrying the bride so that her feet do not touch the ground; (2) covering her head so that the sun does not shine upon it; (3) waiting till the sun has set before taking her to the wedding scherm; (4) the fact that the scherm is specially built and set apart from the others; (5) anointing with fat; (6) painting a design on the forehead and cheeks with powdered red stone; (7) lighting the wedding fire with brands from the fires of the bride's and groom's parents.

585 Apart from the third and seventh, all these elements occur also in the Ceremony of
881 the First Menstruation, a more elaborate and prolonged ceremony from which the
[174] /Kung wedding ceremony undoubtedly derives. The design on the face is the same; the girl's feet must not touch the ground from the instant her first menstruation begins to the end of the period, when she is washed and anointed with both eland or other fat and the oil of the *tsi* (*Bauhinia esculenta* Burch).[1] When the girl is taken to her special scherm or moved out of it to urinate or defecate she is carried on the back of a kinswoman. A kaross over her head shields her from the sun whether she is sitting in the scherm or being carried out.

Our endeavour to bring to light the meaning of the ritual elements yielded little. The meaning or origin of the design on the face, I was convinced, was not withheld but lost to memory, lore or myth. 'It is our custom' was all the people could tell me.

[171] About the ritual of the feet not touching the ground, the custom frequently observed by divine kings and menstruating girls, the /Kung had no more illumination. They think that the carrying is the overcoming of the girl's symbolized modesty about going to the arms of her bridegroom, which she should properly feign even if she is eager to go, and her reluctance to separate from her own family: I think that when the attendants take hold of the bride and groom by the arm and pull them a little they symbolize the overcoming of reluctance and modesty and perhaps there is even a vestige of bride capture in that gesture, but of the feet not touching the ground the meaning is lost. Obviously, however, in this society the bride is equated to the
[174] menstruating girl. In the past the girl's wedding and her first menstruation may have been celebrated at one time.

The /Kung say that the sun is death-giving. When the three months of life-
585 giving rains are past, the sun dries up the water pools. It kills the fresh leaves and
821 fruits, dries the roots and berries, and would scorch the people if they did not find shade and dig shallow pits and lie in them covered lightly with sand which they have moistened with their urine for coolness. They pity the morning star, the *kuli |gaishay*, which crosses the sky all day ahead of the sun, has no branches to carry for shade and
593 cannot turn aside to rest under a tree. The sun is a 'death thing' and the bride
585 is shielded from it.
602 The most important element of behaviour with respect to kinship in the wedding

[113] [1] Robert Story, *Some Plants Used by the Bushmen in Obtaining Food and Water*, Department of Agriculture, Division of Botany, Union of South Africa, Botanical Survey, Memoir No. 30, 1958, p. 25. Dr. Story was a member of the 1955 and 1957 expeditions. We gratefully acknowledge whatever botanical identifications we mention as his.

/160 cont./

805 cold dry season,
warm dry season,
short rainy season,
rainy season.

Just as these various seasons of the year tend to be very irregular in the Kalahari, the Auin's division of the year also is quite variable.

821 There is only one designation, a collective name, for the starry sky.

173 I have not been able to detect any traces of a "history." Only events going back at most two generations are transmitted as an oral tradition.

172 The Auin know nothing about the Bushman drawings. At the watering place Kazupitzaub between Oas and Olifantskluft, in other words, in the Auin region, there are supposedly Bushman drawings on rock walls. The Auin call these drawings the "work of Satan." I should observe that this expression was given me by an interpreter who was unable to supply me with a better translation of the Bushman concept. In case I should once again go to this region, I shall report on this matter.

173 In their own opinion, the Auin have been living in the region they now occupy "as long as there have been human beings."

X. Counting and Calculating

802 Fingers and toes are used for counting.

Five is expressed by the word for hand, ten by two hands, 15 by two hands and one foot, 20 by two hands and two feet.

Among about 20 Rietfontein Auin, there was only one who could count beyond 20. I cannot say, however, whether this man may not have hit upon the idea through my suggestion. He counted up to 40.

[6 cont.]

101 account refers only to the latter.

821 [7] The sky is designated by them as !nanu áiba Éroba Kharésa ("rain house of god").

776 For god they have the expressions "Erob" and "χ'amab"
775 only "Erob" is used in prayers. χ'amab (1) has been preserved

1. χ indicates a very low gutteral click, for which I know of no notation.

in χ'amá //gu Khe = "people who are with god," in other words, the souls of the deceased in heaven. Everyone goes there, the good as well as the bad. Erob has no wife and no children. A human being has only one soul (!gau-ba). This soul goes to the heavenly house and remains there "until Erob makes new people from it." Here is a belief in the transmigration of souls, which, it must be admitted, is not thought through any further.

No spirits of the dead remain on earth. There are little
776 bush spirits, the gangorob; they are harmless and do nothing. There are no evil little spirits. They supposedly know nothing about Heiseb and /Nawa.

136 The supply of game is ample in the tall dry forests of the Otjimpolo Veld. There are also fish in the rainy season. The
[825] Bushmen call them "shiba" (Ovambo: oshi or ochi); in other words, originally they had no word for them.

224 The Bushmen are helpless against the lion (χ'oréba).
[825] They leave a region as soon as lions make it unsafe. "There is no point in hunting them."

The leopard (χ'nába) is hunted with dogs (ariba). The
[439] chiefs of Amboland pay a good price for the skin, since little princes and princesses are not carried in a litter made of cowhide, but in a leopard skin. The jackal (≠Khai-eba) and the Löffelhund (//aruba) [a fox-like wild dog of the subfamily Octocyoninae] are hunted with enthusiasm. "Aruba" probably corresponds to N. //arob = striped jackal.

Wild dogs, "Khere," !nube (N. !goub) are preferably
[825] avoided. No notice is taken of the hyena, ≠Khai-lasa (N. ≠heirab),
[262] and it is not eaten. When they come near the camp, it is not a
[757] good sign.

WESTERN OTJIMPOLO VELD

[7 cont.]

222 The honey badger, !uisa (N. !ous), which leads to the
825 bees, is followed ever so eagerly.

224 The common wild pig (gariba), the kudu (daub), the gemsbok χ'uaba (N. /gaib), and all the small antelopes are hunted. Pits are no longer known, although they used to dig them in former times.

If they decide to go hunting, sexual intercourse must be
[834] avoided the night before. In the evening the hunters go into the forest and spend the night there. Before dawn they rise and pray:

[534] Pu, pu, Erǒ, /nari dsu /ari mate — God, tomorrow early we receive.

When a piece of game has been killed, one of the hunters cuts a piece of flesh from the animal's body and hands it to the leader of the hunt. This meat is called am-shái-khe. A fire is made, and this piece is placed on it. When it is roasted, the leader cuts off a piece and shouts:

[539] Ero, Ero, Ero, ha gore, ha gore — Erob, Erob, Erob, eat, eat
i Khe Khandi ô — With us flesh.

After a pause:

ha lĕ a lĕ ha gǒre o Khandi ô — Come! Come! Let us eat flesh.

Now the roasted flesh is consumed. Nothing is thrown away or left behind for Erob.

Then the game is cut up, and everyone goes home with his portion.

136 Snakes are not rare, although they are by no means as common as in the stony regions of the southwest.

The boa constrictor eats human beings; if it catches a Bushman, it starts to consume him at the legs!

132 In spite of the timber forest, the danger of drought is
821 great. Erob sends rain. When there is a drought, the Bushmen
731 dance and pray:

[539] Ero, Ero, Ero, /ga !goro — Erob, Erob, Erob, we are dying of thirst
/ga-wi -ma ta re — Water give us.

177 [8] It is very interesting to observe how in these certainly
776 very ancient hunting and rain prayers the former old heathen gods'
782 names Huwe and χ'amab were replaced by the Christian "Ellob."

I asked the people whether they knew any other prayers and received the following answer: "We know very well that

[9 cont.]

586 Up to the birth of the first child, the marriage is dissolvable, but not thereafter. Monogamy is the rule; where
595 there is polygamy, the first wife is the "head wife." The eldest
596 brother of the head wife is the family head. The boys belong to
611 the family of the wife, and the daughters to the family of the father.

582 The strictest exogamy prevails. Son and daughter may marry neither into the father's kin group nor into the mother's
[587] kin group. On the other hand, a young widow is usually married by one of her brothers-in-law.

551 The following kin-group names were reported to me: !Nui-a, Dai, ǎben, orasi, Gombe, χ'am, χ'am-Kha.

805 The following times of the day are differentiated:

eruba, time before sunrise.

!khoasa, time of sunrise (N. khoa-am = to open, that is, the door for the sun is opened).

sorésa, "the sun shines."

sorésa ≠kam go, "the young sun goes," breakfast time. In effect, below the tropics one has the impression that the sun, after it has stood on the horizon for a while, moves toward the zenith with great speed.

sorésa !khoai go, "the sun goes back." Noon.

//gui-sa, "it declines (lies down)." Afternoon.

[512] ≠khai-am-go, "to rise and go." After hunting or searching for veldkost, the Bushmen usually take a rest before it is time to go home and start cooking (late afternoon).

≠kha-go, "to go through." (The sun goes through the gate of the night.) Dusk, sunset.

!khui-sa, to be evening.

dschu-ba, night (N. tsuχub).

● 821 These Bushmen have the idea that the old sun dies every night and a new, young sun appears the next morning. That the
[171] moon dies every month and is resurrected again is a notion so widespread in Africa that it is really unnecessary to make special mention of it.

805 The year begins when a new rainy season sets in.

//hauba, "storms rise." Rainy season.

/10 cont./

123 Since I was able to become quite friendly with their "foreman," who possesses a small farm, I discovered some details concerning their outlook on life.

776 They believe in a supreme being which is not conceived of as a human being and which they call ǂ'amaba. Here we have H. Vedder's /Gamab of the Bergdama.

773 ǂ'amaba made everything, the sun, the moon, the stars, and also human beings. First he made the Whites, then the Blacks, and finally the Bushmen. They are unable to say how ǂ'amaba made human beings.

[372] The old Bushmen say that fire comes from the devil.
[776] Heiseb is the devil, according to them. Heiseb and the ostrich played together. The ostrich had the fire on his arm. While dancing the ostrich spread his wings, and Heiseb took the fire from him. Heiseb threw the fire brand behind him. There was a bush which started to burn. And there the people discovered the fire.

776 Heiseb is evil and only does evil. He is conceived as human in form. No one knows where he came from.

ǂ'amaba, on the other hand, is benevolent. People pray to him for help.

539 I took down the following prayers:
782 1. Prayer for rain: In olden times pieces of wood were
821 cut from the !Hawewa tree. It could not be felled. These pieces of wood were thrown into the fire, and as soon as the pungent smoke rose upward, the people sang in chorus:

ǂ'amaba duwa /gam-i-i a a God, give water to drink.
ǂ'amaba duwa /gam-i-i !hanusa God, give water rain,
anita(?) a a so that we may drink.

2. Prayer of thanks for rain: When the rain has finally come, a dance of joy is performed, and the following is sung:

ǂ'ámaba ǂ'ámaba ǂ'ámaba God, God, God
tūta tūta We have received, we have received
!hanusa /gam-i-i !hanusa /gam-i-i Rain water, rain water
tara ái /gam ái !hanusa tutasi We can drink, drink water, receive water.

[10 cont.]

539 χ'ámabe χ'ámabe χ'ámabe χ'ámabe God, God, God, God
782 /gami tara ái Water we can drink!
[821]
271
731

[11] In the waterless wilderness of the palm bush and the Otjimpolo Veld death from thirst often enough overtakes even the Bushmen, accustomed as they are to privation. They [488] do not deny that at times they are forced to leave the old and [758] the sick behind in the wilderness. But such an occurrence stays in the people's memory for a long time as a serious misfortune. Anyone who is acquainted with the Bushmen's love of children and veneration of parents and old people can understand what it means to them to be forced to leave behind one of their own.

271 One must have experienced personally the feeling that overcomes one when due to thirst and heat the body no longer gives off perspiration, the dry forehead feels burning hot, and a slight chill passes through the body, in order to understand this song of joy which seems so naïve, whose content is: We can drink again!

539 3. Short and fervent prayer at the beginning of a
782 journey:
[484] χ'ámaba !Khu gai teve God, let me travel well.

[755] 4. Choral prayer for a sick person: When someone is gravely ill, the relatives sing in chorus, while the doctor performs his ceremonies.

χ'ámaba !khoé-wa ≠khai kháira téve God, let our people rise again.

789 5. Not a real prayer, but rather a formula of exorcism is said to oneself when meeting a stranger regarded as evil: Tshuai Kwewa /Nawa!

821 They do not know anything to say about the sun (sorésa). The moon (χ'áwa) dies every month and wakes up again.

753 Illnesses are sent by χ'amaba. He sends them to those
776 persons with whom he is angry. Other spirits have no role in this, and there is no spirit of sickness.

776 There is a host of little spirits, the /ga /ga hú, in the bush. They play tricks.

775 A human being has only one soul, !gaoba. This soul goes to heaven after death. (!nanu-aiba, rain house?) The house of χ'amaba (≠khauba) is there. Only the doctors know [756] what it looks like up there. They speak with χ'amaba.

/14 cont.I

000 chronic, good-natured imbiber . . .

776 In heaven there is one god, Erob. Lightning (dábara)
[821] and rain (!nanus) are sent by him. He calls heaven χ'ameiba.
This word is very interesting. It can mean both "place of the
/15/ souls (χ'a) " or "place of the χ'amab." The souls
[775] (um-ské) go to heaven after death. "This is what they say,"
said the man, "I haven't been there yet."

He did not know Gauab and Heiseb. Concerning other spirits, he said that people had mentioned them, but he did not believe in them. The spirits are supposedly called "gangarob."
756 The old Bushmen had neither doctors nor medicines against ill-
753 nesses. To my question about what made people ill, he responded with philosophical equanimity: "If one becomes ill, he is ill like an animal." He knew nothing about the sun (soris)
[821] and moon (χ'ab). A sacred fire is unknown to him.
[778]

224 Of greatest interest is his report, undoubtedly based
782 upon autopsy, concerning an initial offering at the hunt. I give the report in literal translation:

"Before people go out to the hunt, they meet at an omsati tree (//Khaia-aib). There a fire is made. Each hunter rips off a number of leaves, spits on them, and throws them into the fire as he shouts:

[539] Érob, Érob, áu tere! God, God, help us!

"When the game has been killed, one first cuts a piece each from the lung, liver, and stomach and throws each piece singly to the side, saying all the while:

Érob úre, Érob úre! God take, God take!

[539] "Then they start to eat."

This function is performed by the one who has killed the game.

881 The following was communicated to me concerning the
585 social organization:

There are initiation ceremonies. The celebration of the first menstruation originally coincided with the wedding. On the first day of menstruation the girl went into a pontok especially constructed for this purpose. Then there was dancing for two or three days, and after the cessation of the menses the girl went to

[32 cont.]

222 Termites are captured in two ways. During the night holes are dug near the tall termite hills, and these holes are illuminated with wooden torches. A hide is placed on the floor of the hole, and soon so many termites are on it that the hide can be carried home. The second method is used to catch those termites that have no structures above ground, but have a network of corridors running horizontally immediately below the surface. A hole is dug deeper than the corridors, and the termites fall into it as they run frightened back and forth on their [33] horizontal paths. [821] This kind of termite serves as a weather prophet for the rain [787] doctor, since they construct the most openings facing upward when a rainy year is in prospect. The lion was not hunted. In olden 224 262 times, only the old people ate the large game. The flesh of predatory animals is forbidden to all children; on the other hand, there is no prohibition against eating hare.

224 Naturally, the Bushmen are very anxious to have success in hunting. !Khu himself, the great captain, brings luck in hunting. He orders the supreme //Gauab (/Nawa) to direct the arrow. The doctors always pray to the great captain to send hunting luck, but there is no specific formula. They do this "quietly to themselves." An old prospector in Kalkfeld told me that he had seen the following among the !Kung Bushmen: "Before they go hunting, they draw the outline of the animal in the sand and with all kinds of ceremonies they shoot an arrow into the drawing. Where the figure is hit, the game will also be struck."

I shall now render fairly literally the course of a kudu hunt as it was described to me by a Bushman: "When I have found a kudu track, then we follow it very quietly and when we have found the place where the kudu ate, then one must be very careful. One person goes ahead, and the others follow. Now, when I see the kudu standing, I take out the poisoned arrow and shoot. Then I look to see what the kudu is doing or shoot once more; then I follow him to see whether the arrow will drop out; if the arrow falls out, I take it and see how deeply it penetrated into the kudu. Then I have to go back to the other hunters and state exactly how everything was. Then we go home. One should not run after the kudu, but must leave it alone. The person who

Gastrointestinal Disorders

753 It is interesting to note that the doctrine of the importance
[171] of the liver and gall bladder in the origin of disease, which we find among all primitive and civilized peoples up to the humoral medicine of the previous century, is already present among the Bushmen. When the gall bladder is full, one becomes sick and
[755] vomits gall. Then the region of the liver is massaged, just as is
[164] done in the case of liver pains. Enlargement of the liver as the result of chronic malaria is common. The moon, which dies
[821] every month, also has gall sickness, and moonlight is the juice of the gall bladder vomited by it. Moonlight and gall are known
[164] by the same word (goo). Spleen tumor is especially common
757 among children. They have no medicine against splenalgia.
278 They have no medicine for inducing vomiting. It is induced by putting the finger or a feather into the mouth. To stop vomiting, one chews little twigs of the goro tree. The bitter wood of the liana (χ'áã-χ'ãn) is chewed for stomach-ache. In case of con-
[753] stipation the doctor must practice magic, for it is assumed that
[755] the dsao have tied the stool in the intestine, and the doctor must loosen and extract the cord, just as in the case of an inflammation of the throat. The patient may not eat anything and drink very little. In case of diarrhea, even the bleeding kind, the same medicine is taken as in the case of stomach-aches. Intestinal
147 worms are unknown. We already know from earlier reports that the
262 gastrointestinal tract of the Bushman can take all kinds of things that we cannot take. As the result of habituation from early childhood on, he can digest meat that has gone bad and the like, without any trouble (1). After a long period of hunger, he can consume

1. I myself witnessed a drastic example of this. I had brought a side of bacon from Swakopmund, which supposedly had been preserved for all eternity according to a special process. When I brought it out, it had a hideous smell, and in order to prevent the Bushmen from taking it and getting sick, I had it hung high on a tree. The

[52 cont.]

754 further. The belly of the unconscious person swells enormously.
755 When all other procedures have proved futile and someone remembers that this or that doctor has the magic medicine, he is called in, takes some of his bloodlike fluid from his horn, and first smears his own feet and then rubs the patient's feet and, above all, the patient's stomach in a circular massage. Gradually the swelling recedes, the patient gets up, sits down, and is cured.

This story, based upon the fact that there are roots with
648 bloodlike sap, became known by the farmers in a confused fashion and was the cause of the ridiculous fear of the secret poisons of the Bushmen that many farmers have.

15. The Elements

773 Heaven and earth, sun and moon, all was made by ǂ'u,
821 the great captain, the supreme being. In the sun-scorched deserts inhabited by the Bushmen, the sun is no dispenser of mercy. During the hot season even the Bushman is forced to remain in the shade in the daytime, because the sand is so hot that he cannot walk on it.

The sun was a daughter of man. The Bushmen had seen her, and the men had to carry this daughter, but since she burned with such heat on their shoulders, the men had to frequently change places. When the shoulders of all the men were burned, they left the sun lying in the bush and did not take her to the huts. This is the place from which the sun rose. She is from the great captain.

When the sun sets, she sits down on the earth to eat. When it is to be day, one of her shoulderblades goes to the other side of the world where it appears as the sun. The sun's rays (/gam ǂhasn) are the arms of the sun. The eclipse of the sun (ǂKáo) is caused by the lions so that they can more easily eat human beings.

The Bushman becomes cheerful only when the cool of the evening arrives, and at the time of the full moon he celebrates his festivals. There is no question of moon worship, however, among the !Kung Bushmen I visited.

[52 cont.]

773 821 Concerning the moon, I was told: "The moon was also carried by people. It was not as warm as the sun, but very heavy. So the men helped each other, and with great difficulty they brought it to the huts. The moon was a man. He said: 'I prefer to remain alone and do not wish to be among you.' Thereupon the Bushmen said: 'If you go alone into the desert, you will surely die.' But the moon did not obey, went out, and died. But then it woke up again and rose like the sun; therefore, like the latter, it is from the 'Great Captain.' When it disappears, it has died. When only one side of it is visible, then it is young. When it becomes smaller, then it is old. The color of the moon comes from its gall (/gôo)."

The well-known story of the moon and the hare is told there as follows:

The moon once said to the hare: "I die and wake up again, you on earth should do the same." But the hare answered: "No, we cannot do that, we who are on earth, only you can do that because you are in the air, among us this is impossible; once we die, we do not wake up again." And the hare was right; it is still so today.

821 [825] The eclipse of the moon, !nui dsao, is caused by the lions so that they can more easily steal into the Bushman huts.

[53] Comets, ǂ'u !gam, are stars of the great captain; [777] they bring luck. When a shooting star, ǂgomma, falls, it is said, [787] just as among us, that someone has died. The stars are the camp- [775] fires of those spirits who at the command of the great captain come down and fetch the souls of the dying.

[823] Earthquakes, ǂ'áno !gee, are omens of sickness. The [787] rainbow, !khâni !náo, indicates a good year for rain.

[782] What the Bushman begs and prays for is not sunshine but [776] rain. The great captain alone dispenses rain.

Lightning and thunder are not beings in themselves, but are caused by rain. When someone is killed by lightning, it is said: "The rain has killed him." When there are flashes of lightning and thunder at a distance, the rain is saying: "Today I shall thunder over the whole earth." When there are flashes of lightning and thunder on various sides, the clouds are speaking to one another. And when they touch each other with their heads, the

!KUNG

[53 cont.]

821 rain comes down and the clouds extend over the whole world. The rain that has come down to earth does not stay there; the clouds again come forth from the earth. The rain obeys the great captain. In a storm the great captain knocks down the trees. If a person says something bad about him, however, punishment is not long in coming. X 'u says to the rain: "You must now go and kill him." And the rain goes and kills the man with lightning. But when the great captain says to the rain, "You must go now and punish him," then the lightning merely strikes the windscreen so that the whole thing collapses and the evildoer is thrown out. Then the people come running, rub the unconscious person with medicine, and burn his skin with red-hot pieces of wood until he comes to again.

Thus the angry great captain metes out punishment.

The Bushman concerned, however, is far from either privately or publicly begging the great captain for forgiveness. He is convinced that this would do no good. On the contrary, he puts his confidence in the following procedure: It is known that where lightning strikes quartz sand, so-called lightning tubes or fulgurites arise. This phenomenon has not remained hidden from the sharp eye of the Bushmen. My friends told me: There where lightning has struck one usually finds a stone called "rain tooth." The person brushed by lightning scratches his skin with this stone, rubs in medicine which is supposed to bring luck in hunting, and tries to hunt down a gemsbok. If he succeeds, he cooks the meat of the gemsbok with the rain tooth. If there is a second person in the horde who has previously been brushed by lightning, that person must eat the meat with him. Then medicine is made from this meat and other ingredients, and this is placed in the horn of a small bushbuck and carried around the neck by the person concerned.

When the "rain" comes again, he again goes to the hut of the person struck, walks through the fire where the buck was cooked, takes a bone of the buck (these bones remain lying on the spot), and goes with it into the nearest tree. The bone cooks in the tree, and the scum comes out on the side and the fat below. When the rain has passed, the bone is again pulled out and cooked with gemsbok horn and duiker horn and flesh; then it is

[53 cont.]

751 burned to a tinder and pulverized to make a medicine. The per-
821 son struck now has incisions made on his tongue, forehead, cheeks, chest, and legs, into which fat is rubbed, and then this medicine is smeared on. Now, for the time being, he is safe from persecution by the rain.

16. Rain Magic

789 People turn directly to the great captain when they need
[756] rain. Not all doctors are able to procure rain, only the few who
796 enjoy the special favor of the great captain. Then a dance is organized, at which the doctors put themselves in the trance state described below. At the same time the following lament is repeated countless times:

[54]

[539]

!garǻ gurí dee oa ǂam	Why does it not rain?
ǀ'uǻ dě rá /gaa !ái /gaa	Which lord is holding back the rain?
/gǻm khui hē	The sun is hot.
!kŭng-ná gurí /gŏǻ /gŏǻ	Will man live?
//gauǻna tani /gee ǂgáo	Are the spirits bringing winter?
!kung /goá hŏŏ !koa	Where is man supposed to drink?
!kung ō dshn-ǎ	
//gaa /a //gŏě !kung /n̄ a //gŏě	If it is so, can man only die of thirst?
!kunǻ //goě ne oa	What can man do now?
Ha-!kung tam hā m tam ná /n̄ gěě	We had better stay here because we have been abandoned!

756 Finally the great captain in heaven hears the lamenting.
789 The doctor runs from the dance place into the bush and sees that
787 a thin thread is let down from the sky. The doctor climbs up on
796 this thread. The great captain comes to meet him half way. As soon as the doctor sees the great captain, he throws a red powder (ocher with medicine) toward him. Now the great captain draws the doctor up and leads him to the heavenly house. In front of this house [Fig. 20 appears here] the doctor sees the spirits of
[775] his deceased colleagues who year in, year out, stand before the house.

[54 cont.]

756 house. The doctor then begins to pray: "Lord, help us, the chil-
789 dren are dying, we are dying of thirst and hunger." He prays and
787 begs until the captain says: "It is good, I shall send water so that
796 the children will have water and veldkost." Then the great captain again accompanies the doctor halfway down. As soon as the doctor is down below, he lets go of the thread which is immediately drawn up. Now the people dance and sing, for the rain has come:

[539] /gǻ-é dsó-jā /gaa — We rejoice now over the rain.
//ē gā djusǎ !kho ǻdshója /ga — Then we rejoice all together.
//ē gā hin a /gaa /gaa — Then the rain comes.
da //goǻ dshn !gu da adschŏéa χ'u — Then the people praise the lord.

532]

Fig. 21. Spirits of the Dead and Rain Animal (from Bleek, Rock Paintings in South Africa etc., Pl. 58).

776 Another !Kung said to me: "The great captain in the sky
821 sends the rain and all that comes from above. If he does not want to, everything remains shut up. The rain is opened up above; a great vlei is there. I do not know the name of the great captain. The Hei//om call him Som-seb."

17. Religion

771 After a critical look at the sum of the conceptions determining
177 the religious life of the !Kung, one recognizes, as would naturally be expected in the case of such an ancient people, that the elements

[57 cont.]

776 [771] Dama, and the translation of Gauab as "devil" comes from this circle of ideas. A baptized !Kung in /Nuiseb also told me that the Bushmen had been made by the devil, for the latter, as the old doctors reported to me, had once said to things: "You shall [773] be a kudu, you an eland, you a Bushman," etc., and so everything was. Among the !Kung Bushmen /Nawa is by no means always evil. He directly brings luck on the hunt, and a kind of primitial offering is sent to him in that small pieces of the flesh of the game are thrown into the fire.

/Nawa, however, usually also sends sickness, in part with, and in part without the consent of the great captain. /Nawa is neither in heaven nor on earth, but runs about on threads in the air, where the other small spirits also run about. Whether or not /Nawa [821] has a wife is unknown. The wind has no role in the tall bush forest, but my experience among the Bushmen of the western Kalahari and the Namib indicates that /Nawa is also connected in some way with the wind, since his most personal appearance is in the violent wind spouts, and among the Naukluft Bushmen one is not supposed to speak ill of the wind because the Gauab would overturn the windscreen.

Aside from /Nawa, there is a whole host of other small spirits, such as those who are at the disposal of the great captain [821] and /Nawa and live in the sky, where the stars are their campfires. They are the ones who steal the soul from human beings and take it to the great captain. Then there are those who, like /Nawa, run to and fro on threads stretching between heaven and earth. Very evil little spirits live in the water, and the forest and veld are peopled by the little Gauab. These, however, are only the [775] flesh-born spirits of deceased human beings. And with this we come to

18. Doctrine of the Soul and Belief in Immortality

775 [774] The life principle of human beings is the soul, cha. The same word also means heart. This cha is immortal. The Gauab who live among the stars take it to the great captain's house. The souls of all peoples, even those of the Whites, live there on the

[64 cont.]
825 existence. The appearance of the ring-necked snake indicates
[787] misfortune.

Animistic conceptions are more pervasive in the world
774 picture of the Masarwa (2). According to Dornan, each thing is a

821
●

2. The Kalahari Bushmen (Dornan, op. cit., p. 165) have some knowledge of the stars. The Southern Cross is a giraffe, but the Cape Bushmen regard it as a group of lions. Some of the Bushmen regard the stars as animals or human beings who have gone up to the sky.

773 The following story is told: During the girls' initiation a girl who possessed magical powers nodded to some lions and they were immediately transformed into stars.

The Cape Bushmen told another story: During the girls' initiation a girl was quarreling with her mother because the latter refused to give her certain roots that may not be eaten at such times. The girl seized the roots and the ashes and threw them toward the sky. The roots became stars, the ashes became the Milky Way. -- Shooting stars signify misfortune.

774 kind of spirit. Human beings and animals can each transform
[825] themselves into the other. Individual doctors change into leopards, and many animals are regarded as other appearances of man, especially the springbok, the baboon, and a number of snakes. When a ring-necked snake approaches a village, it indicates
[177] death. Bantu influence is undoubtedly at work here.

[184] The !Kung doctrine of two souls reappears in a different
774 form among the Masarwa. The shadow of each thing, as well as
975 that of the human being, is its other soul. They believe that the shadow soul remains in the vicinity of the grave, while the self walks in another place where it meets with the fathers. It is supposed to be warm there, and supposedly there is much game. In the beyond one acts the same as on this earth.

I AUIN
NARON
NOGAU

[73 cont.]

726 Before going to war, the body is smeared with a magic medicine (/num). If old enemies are involved, the attack is carried out by subterfuge and stealth. Otherwise the opponents face each other in open battle. Depending upon the degree of enmity, they shoot at each other with either poisoned or unpoisoned arrows. Commonly, however, a conference of the leaders takes place before the beginning of the battle, which leads to a peaceful dispersal of the combatants. The principles of natural morality are honored and recognized both within and outside the horde. It is regarded as bad to inflict harm on another person or not to assist him if he is in need, not because any kind of punishment is to be feared, but because this is what elders have taught.

6. The World Picture and Religion

821 The sun is a man and is called /gam or kha//ã, the hunter. The moon is a woman and is called !nui or /nauga, "the one who runs around."

773 821 Formerly the sun, the moon, and the hare lived together. One day Mrs. Moon and Mr. Hare were having a quarrel. The moon split open the hare's snout with an ax. The hare then scratched the moon's face. This is still visible today. When the sun came home, he became angry and said: "Now we have had enough of the earth; now we shall go up so that the hare will be alone. I shall burn him from above, and I shall become very hot so that during the day he cannot run about as he wants to." The moon replied: "That is a good idea; at night I shall go and bring the cold, so that the hare will freeze when he looks for his food."

Since that time, the sun and moon are in the firmanent.

The dome of the sky is the covering of the sun and moon. When the sun and moon went up to the sky, they had little sacks of resin with them. They threw them away. The grains of resin are now the stars.

When the sun, moon, and hare were still together, the sun said, "Men shall not die," and the moon agreed with him. But the hare said: "No, people must die, because I, too, must die."

726 821 Rain is made by sorcerers; these are called Gowa. They do

#AUIN
NARON
NOGAU

[73 cont.]

776 821 [789] [535] [534] not die, but otherwise they are like people, except that they have black skin. When there is no rain, the Bushmen make a large fire and throw into it a root, "he," and a male turtle. As soon as it starts to rain, they dance, strike themselves on the thighs, and sing: "Ehe, ehe, ehe, ije, ije, ije, ehe, ehe, ehe," etc. The sorcerers can transform themselves into lions.

The rain sorcerer lives on earth as other people do. The rainbow is the rain dog. The clouds are the rain hairs.

At the time of new moon, they say the moon is sleeping. During the night the sun runs back to the east.

Thunder and lightning are not made by the rain, but by Gauab who among these Bushmen has become a personification of evil. Lightning is called "Gauab's knife."

The dark night sky is the covering of the moon and sun. The dome of the sky is called /gna. My informants left it an open question as to whether the sun perhaps "might be the greatest," the one who has made everything. On the other hand, Khu is likewise regarded as the creator. He made heaven and earth, and he also made human beings live. Khu is not a human being; he is good, but nothing more is known about him. He does not interfere in the course of the world and of human life. To be sure, they say, "Khu is the greatest, and Gauab is the smallest," but nonetheless Gauab plays a larger role in their lives. He controls thunder and lightning, he races over the steppe as a destructive wind spout, visible to all, and he also kills people by tearing out their souls and making a little Gauab out of them. This little Gauab in turn runs about in the bush and does all kinds of evil things.

794 797 821 [74] There is a secret moon cult among the Naron. They pray to the new moon for rain. In olden times certain stars, especially the morning star and the Southern Cross, which they call "fire shoe," are also supposed to have been invoked. The story of 773 821 the moon and the hare is told in the following way: The moon said: "People must die and arise again, just as I die and return again." But the hare contradicted her and said that people should remain dead. The moon then became angry and cut the hare's mouth with a hoe.

"The moon is an old man, and the sun a young girl, his wife. First the moon goes under the sky, and then the sun follows behind

[74 cont.]

773 him. They go to their huts which are under the horizon in the
● 821 west. At night or during the day, respectively, they go back to their huts in the east; one can hear them but cannot see them."

114 776 Kaufmann was unable to discover anything concrete concerning the high gods of the ≠Auin. Concerning the Naron, Bleek
776 relates that a curious mixture of religious conceptions has come about. A central position is occupied by Hise or Hyesa, who is designated as !Khuba or !Xuba by the adult men. The old people knew nothing about this. The Nama designate !Khub as master or lord, and this word is used by a number of missionaries for Christ. These elders maintain that this concept has been adopted
[777] from the Nama. Formerly they only knew Hise, who lived in the east. Hise is evidently the same as Heitsi Aibib (literally, "the first tree").

The Naron relate that in olden times both the trees and the
773 animals were human beings who were transformed by Hise into their present shapes. Then Hise called the chiefs of the Whites and Blacks and said to them: "Take cows and goats and live with them." But to the first chiefs of the Bushmen he said: "Take the antelopes and live on them; make traps and hunt and live in the bush."

The expression Huwu or Huwuba is known and is supposed to
776 designate the great captain of the men in the north. The details given by Miss Bleek concerning //Gauwa are interesting. In the opinion of the Naron and ≠Auin, //Gauwa is the spirit of a de-
[775] ceased person. Medicine men can also see these spirits; the
[847] women can only hear them. Many a woman declared that only men who had gone through the initiation ceremony and who have two scars between the eyebrows can become //Gauwa. A strong, howling wind is also designated as //Gauwa, however. A few individuals also believe in a chief spirit by this name, who lives near Hise in the east and to whose house the spirits return by day. Some designate //Gauwa as the younger brother of Hise; others identify him with the latter.

The Naron put both masculine and feminine endings on the word Hise. Among the ≠Auin he appears during their dances at

[232]

N/OW

LORNA MARSHALL

821 *N/ow*[1] is a belief concerning rain and cold which is held by the /Kung Bushmen in the region around Nyae Nyae in South West Africa.

132 About ten inches of rain falls in an average year in this part of the Kalahari Desert and sinks into the deep sands. There is no run-off in streams and there are few water
137 holes. The rain is sufficient to support a covering vegetation of grass, shrubs, and scrubby trees. The vegetation includes numerous edible roots, tubers, leaves, fruits, and nuts, for which the Afrikaans language provides the convenient word *veldkos*.

105 The /Kung, the only inhabitants of the interior of this particular region, are
821 nomadic hunters and gatherers. If the rains are poor and the veldkos dry and sparse, the people suffer. Rain, they say, is life-giving; sun is death-giving.

132 Summer is the season of the ' big rains ' in the western Kalahari. ' Little rains '—a few scant showers—may fall in September, October, and November. The ' big rains ' begin in late December or January and continue into March. The summer storms are awesome. Every day the winds drive monstrous clouds around the sky, which domes a horizon as flat as the sea. They breed the storms. Lightning streaks from them. Thunder roars and rumbles. The earth sucks in their deluges, hissing.

821 The /Kung say that thin clouds which give no rain are male. They call them */now*.[2] The big rain clouds are female. White ones they call *//ga kwe disi*—*//ga* means cloud or rain, *disi* means females.[3] The enormous grey clouds with rain pouring from them the /Kung call */kwesi* (zebras), because they are so fleet and, though a person may think he is far from the rain, it comes swiftly and is on him. We have seen Bushmen, caught without shelter in the storms, shivering so that their teeth chattered, saying they could perish in such rain.

532 Rain itself is male and female, */ga /go* and */ga di*. The men one day drew in the sand the spoor of male and female rain. Male rain spoor was made with all five fingers held stiffly and plunged deeply into the sand, to make big holes. Male rain breaks the trees and beats down the fruits, the men told us. It is (like) a fight, and may kill a person. Thunder and lightning accompany it, and sometimes hail. Female rain has tiny drops and does not spoil anything; it beautifies the trees and the grass and makes the veldkos grow. Its spoor was made by smoothing out a place in the sand and cover-
532 ing it closely with tiny dots. Gao said a person (anyone) may speak to the rain, saying, ' You are doing very well ', or, ' Fall silently. Don't make such a noise. Don't be

[1] We wish to thank both Dr. Mary Douglas and Professor I. Schapera for reading the manuscript about *n/ow* and for making several helpful suggestions.

[2] The /Kung language has four clicks: / is the symbol for the dental click, ≠ for the alveolar, ! for the alveolar palatal, and // for the lateral.

[3] We did not know how to translate *kwe*, which occurs very often. It seemed sometimes to be a sort of article and we did not work on it especially. We regret not having done so because Miss Bleek, in her *Bushman Dictionary* (American Oriental Society, New Haven, Connecticut, 1936), records in the Auen or //K"au-//en language, which she says is very like the /Kung and which she places south of the /Kung, the phrase */go -k"wisi*, meaning rain's hair or cloud. In /Kung */go* and *//ga* both mean rain. We now wonder if *kwe* should be *kwi* and if it means hair in the phrase *//ga kwe disi*.

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dangerous.' When they do they use the word *n/oi*. It is a word for gentle rain, and also a respect word. They use it for male rain when they are afraid of it and avoid its real name, */ga /go*.

The rains of the western Kalahari are local, falling from clouds which the winds herd. They may fill one pan and miss another. Laurence Marshall spent one whole night, tentless, in a drenching downpour, to find in the morning that a mile away no rain had fallen. But by and large the rains are sufficient in quantity and well enough dispersed to fill most of the water-holes, pans, and hollow trees, and to revive the growing things, so that the autumn months, which follow the rains, are good—the best of the year. Then the /Kung may travel anywhere within their territories to hunt and gather the fresh veldkos. The rains are life-giving.

Winter is the season of dryness. It is also the season of burning sun in the cloudless sky by day and freezing cold when the sun sets. Bitter winds catch up the sparks of the fires at night and whirl them in blazing streaks into the darkness. If water is left in an open bowl, it may be ice in the morning. By mid-winter, July, there has been no rain for three or four months. The pans and small water-holes are dry. Though there are still foods to be gathered, like the mangetti nuts in the northern forest, there is no water on the route, nor in the white sand dunes where the mangettis grow, and the people cannot carry enough in their ostrich-egg shells to go to the mangettis and return. In 7,500 square miles of the interior of the region around Nyae Nyae, there are only five water-holes which do not dry up in the winter and spring. The /Kung bands must gather around whatever permanent water-hole they belong to and restrict their hunting and gathering trips to conform one way or another to the problem of water. This region, incidentally, does not abound in tsama melons and, though there are succulent so-called 'water' roots to be found, they seem not to be sufficient to support whole bands for long. The Nyae Nyae bands, it appears, cannot, or at least do not, base themselves for long periods away from their water-holes.

The spring months which follow the dry months of winter are the dangerous months. The sun is scorching. Fruits and leaves shrivel; the edible roots, stirred by the few tantalizing drops of the little rains, or just because it is spring, give up their juices to the first new shoots and are dry and bitter to eat. The people longingly await the rains, saying it is the sun which dries the water-holes and the plant foods. The /Kung of this region use one word for both sun and dryness, */kam*, and say the sun is death-giving.

In their beliefs about *n/ow*,[1] which they think influences the weather, as this paper will describe, they make an antithesis between rain and cold. This seems paradoxical when one experiences the devastating heat of the sun in September, October, and November, but the resolution of the paradox may lie in the fact that the hardships of the dry seasons begin with the rainless winter months and their bitterly cold nights, so that sun, dryness, cold and want become a complex which is in antithesis to rain and plenty. *N/ow* is called 'bad' if it brings cold, 'good' if it brings rain.

Mrs. Hoernlé[2] records a Hottentot belief called */nau*. The word appears to be

[1] We spell the /Kung word *n/ow* in this way because it rhymes with 'how'. We wish to distinguish it from another /Kung word, */naw*, which it closely resembles, but which has a slightly shorter, more [illegible] sound. */Naw* means 'old man', according to Miss Bleek's *Bushman Dictionary*. We heard it used as a term of respect in addressing old men.

[2] Hoernlé, Agnes W., 'Certain Rites of Transition and the Conception of */nau* among the Hottentots', *Harvard African Studies*, II (1918), pp. 75-77.

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Kung

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similar to the /Kung word *n/ow* in sound but refers to a different belief. In the /Kung belief, *n/ow* influences rain. The Hottentot concept of */nau* supposes a state of being which exists when people are in periods of crisis in their lives. Professor Schapera[1] says of the state of */nau*, summarizing Mrs. Hoernlé's analysis:

> All periods of crisis in the life of a Hottentot involve his separation from his usual surroundings, his preparation for a new group in society, and, finally, his reception into this group. A person in such a crisis is exposed to danger on every side; he must retire from contact with other people, and take special care of himself. But he is also a danger to other people, and more especially to the animals and other living things upon which the community depends for its livelihood. Hence he is secluded, and must abstain scrupulously from his usual tasks.
>
> Such a person is said to be */nau*. It is essential that he be initiated, as it were, with the least possible delay into that group of his people already possessing the new characteristic he has acquired, in order that he may have a normal place in the community once more.

Remarried persons or persons newly widowed are examples.

171 796 821 114

Mrs. Hoernlé records a rain ceremony of the Hottentots which has several elements in common with the /Kung belief about *n/ow*. The Hottentot ceremony is called the *guri≠ab* (yearly killing).[2] Professor Schapera's[3] description of the *guri≠ab*, which follows, is, as he says, based mainly on Mrs. Hoernlé's account.

> . . . It [the ceremony] is held, if possible, on the banks of a stream, and if there is no stream near by, then a trench is dug to simulate one. When the old men judge that the summer rains are due (about November or December), they tell the chief that it is time to hold the yearly feast, and he sends word to all the outlying families, and decides the time and spot for the ceremony.
>
> Each family contributes according to its means, all bringing milk, and those who can, some female animal, a cow or a ewe, which must be pregnant. The feast cannot be held at all without one pregnant animal. . . . fires are lit to cook the meat for the feast. In addition a fire is lit on the banks of the stream for the special part of the ceremony. The animals are killed and cut up very carefully, so as to preserve intact the uteri, which are kept till after the feast. Eating apparently goes on most of the time until all the food is finished.
>
> When the fire at the riverside is ready, and a channel has been made to the river or stream, the old men of the tribe who are good at prophesying take the uteri, hold them over the fire and pierce them with sticks so that the uterine fluid flows directly through the fire and down the river. At the same time milk in plenty and fat from the animals are thrown on the fire, so that liquid really flows, and great clouds of smoke rise into the sky. Meanwhile all the people round gather together in a great tribal dance, calling on *Tsui ǁGoab* to send the rain in plenty, to make the ground soft and the grass green, so that they may have plenty of food for the year.

The uterine fluid, the fire and clouds of smoke rising into the sky, and the association of the ceremony with rain are the elements in the Hottentot belief which are similar to the elements in the /Kung Bushman belief of *n/ow*. But, though there are these interesting common elements, the /Kung concept differs largely from the Hottentot *guri≠ab*.

[1] Schapera, I., *The Khoisan Peoples of South Africa*, New York, 1951, pp. 256–7.

[2] Hoernlé, Agnes W., 'A Hottentot Rain Ceremony', *Bantu Studies*, I, No. 2 (May 1922), pp. 3–4.

[3] Schapera, op. cit., p. 379.

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N/ow of the /Kung is something which influences weather, bringing rain if it is 821
'good' *n/ow*, or cold if it is 'bad' *n/ow*. Precisely what *n/ow* consists of was never made explicit. Nothing about it can be seen. One knows of its existence, the /Kung say, by observing its effects upon the weather.

N/ow exists in all human beings, the /Kung believe, and in certain big animals, 821
namely: giraffe, eland, gemsbok, kudu, hartebeest, and wildebeest. For the sake of 825
brevity I shall refer to these animals as the *n/ow* animals. Small animals do not have *n/ow*, according to the /Kung. We wanted to learn why, but the /Kung could only tell us that they were so created. Steenbok have positively no *n/ow* at all. Some informants claimed that duikers had none, others said that duikers' *n/ow* was undeveloped. Informants were also uncertain about springbok. There are very few springbok in the region and informants said they killed them so seldom that they had not observed whether or not they had *n/ow*. Possibly other large animals would be found to have *n/ow* if the question were further pursued.[1] There was no disagreement among /Kung 821
informants about other things; no other things have *n/ow*—not earth itself, nor vegetation nor other objects on earth; not water, clouds, rain, thunder or lightning, nor heavenly bodies. Not even the two Gods themselves have *n/ow* in them, neither [776]
the great one who lives in the eastern sky, nor his namesake (his */guma*) who lives in the western sky, both of whom bear the names Huwe, Hishi, and ≠Gao/na, our informants told us.

N/ow gets into a human being in the womb. Exactly how this happens informants 821
could not tell us. It was our impression that they were not hiding information, for 843
they seemed willing enough to talk about *n/ow* and said it was not dangerous or 827
harmful in any way to speak freely about it. We think they simply did not know. One informant said, 'The child gets the *n/ow* in the womb and is born with it.' Another said, 'The *n/ow* is created in the womb.' Another said, 'The great Creator gives the [776]
n/ow and taught the people to do the things they do about it. He made all things and made all things to be known.' The *n/ow* acquired in the womb remains in a person all his life.

Some persons get a 'good' rain-bringing *n/ow*, others get a 'bad' cold-bringing *n/ow*. When we wanted to learn how this happened we were told that 'When the mother's uterine fluid flows into the ground, it makes a *n/ow* in the child which brings rain or a *n/ow* which does not bring rain'.

The mother has no voluntary control over this, nor has anyone else; and there is nothing, like medicine or magic, spell or ceremony, which can be used to cause the *n/ow* to be one kind or the other. Furthermore, the child does not inherit a good or bad *n/ow* from his mother or father or any ancestors. The philosophy, lore, or belief about the question of what causes the *n/ow* to be one or the other kind, whatever it may have been in the past, seems not to be known now with clarity or detail.

Two verbs were used in connexion with *n/ow*: to *≠gani* and to *//ghui*. The /Kung 792
say that the mother has *≠gani*(ed) the child if it gets a good *n/ow* and has *//ghui*(ed) it if 827

[1] Miss Lucy Lloyd (*A Short Account of Further Bushman Material, Third Report*, London, 1889, p. 19) mentions that a Bushman informant, Dia/kwain by name, who worked with her and with Dr. Bleek before his death, and who came from the Katkop Mountains, south of the Orange River, told her that 'A baboon, when killed, resembles a man, in "making cloud"'. No more information was given in the report, but the concept of 'making cloud' suggests that possibly the now extinct or almost extinct Cape Bushmen had a belief which may have resembled in some ways the concept of *n/ow*. [171]

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!Kung

it gets a bad *n/ow*. We heard the words used constantly in connexion with *n/ow* and rain and cold, but know of the use of only one of them in another connexion. The /Kung say that a child '*//gkui*(s) its name' if its teeth come late. We do not know precisely how to translate the words and hope that a linguist will some time throw more light on them.

≠Toma, one of our informants, pondering on the question of how the *n/ow* comes to be of one kind or the other in a person, said he thought the child's position in the womb and whether the child had long or short legs might have something to do with it, but he was not sure of this, and knew no more to tell us. A caul or a breech-birth does not make the *n/ow* good or bad, he thought. Other informants thought that severely deformed infants or twins might possibly be more likely than others to get a bad *n/ow*, but they too were uncertain. (Possibly this is because deformed infants and the weaker one of twins are killed at birth by /Kung mothers, so there is little occasion to think about the *n/ow* of such children.)

It is discovered what kind of *n/ow* a child has by observing the weather at the time of its birth or soon after. If it rains the people believe the *n/ow* of the child has brought the rain and are sure the *n/ow* is good. If water should freeze when the child was born or soon after, the child's *n/ow* would be known to be bad. Should the weather continue in its normal seasonal course and no great extreme or notable change occur, the child's *n/ow* will be thought to be probably of the rain-bringing or cold-bringing kind according to the type of weather which prevailed; but if the weather is extreme at the time of the birth there is a feeling of certainty about the kind of *n/ow* the child has acquired, as the /Kung believe the effect of the *n/ow* was clearly observable.

At death as well as at birth the *n/ow* of a human being influences the weather. A /Kung told us that his *n/ow* had brought heavy rain when he was born and that everyone knew he had a rain-bringing *n/ow*. He said his mother, who lived at some distance from where he lived, noticed the weather and, if rain came at an unusual time or was unusually heavy, she feared he had died and that his *n/ow* was causing the rain to come.

N/ow is said to exist in the bodies of human beings (presumably everywhere in them). Informants mentioned it particularly as associated with uterine fluid at the time of birth and with the urine and hair of humans.

Hair is associated with clouds by the /Giwke Bushmen in the Bechuanaland Protectorate, with whom we worked in 1955. They have a myth, told to us by the old headman, Oukwane, which says that God, whose name there is Pisiboro, and who is their one God, tore the black, black hair from his head and threw it into the sky to make the rain clouds.

In *Specimens of Bushman Folklore*,[1] Dr. Bleek and Lucy Lloyd record a belief about death, collected in 1875 in the Katkop dialect from the informant Dia/kwain, which refers to hair and clouds. We quote the statement:

> The hair of our head will resemble clouds, when we die, when we in this manner make clouds. These things are those which resemble clouds; and we think that (they) are clouds. We, who do not know, we are those who think in this manner, that (they) are clouds. We, who know, when we see that they are like this, we know that (they) are a person's clouds; (that they) are the hair of his head. We, who know, we are those who think thus, while we feel that we seeing recognize the clouds, how the clouds do in this manner form themselves.

[1] Bleek, W. H. I., and Lloyd, L. C., *Specimens of Bushman Folklore*, London, 1911, pp. 399–401.

6:Marshall E-5 (1950-1955) 1957 FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

The same informant gave more information about ' making cloud '. He said: 'And, our gall, when we die, sits in the sky; it sits green in the sky, when we are dead.' His mother told him, Dia/kwain continued, ' that it (thus) happens to us if we sit in the shade when the place is not particularly warm, when it is (only) moderately warm, (and) we feel that the summer seems as if it would be hot. We think: "Allow me to sit for a little in the shade under the bush; for the sun's eye is not a little hot; I will sit a little while in the shade "; (then) we make clouds; our liver goes out from the place where we are sitting in the shade, if the place is not hot. Therefore, we make clouds on account of it. For, when it is really summer, then we (may) sit in the shade.'

We do not know what connexion there may be between the concept of *n/ow* held at present by the /Kung of Nyae Nyae and the /Gikwe myth of Pisiboro's hair making the rain clouds, or the hair of the dead resembling clouds and becoming the dead person's clouds, as Dia/kwain told Dr. Bleek, or a person's gall ' sitting green in the sky ', or a person making clouds because his liver goes out from the place where he is sitting in the shade if the place is not hot. We hope someone else may be able to throw more light on this. The /Kung of Nyae Nyae make so little point of teaching old stories or lore to their children that much must be lost.

What the /Kung believe now, Demi told us, is that there is nothing about hair itself which affects the weather. It is the *n/ow* of the person which the hair ' gives '. As we understand it, some of the *n/ow* which is in a person is in the hair. When hair is burned in the fire, the *n/ow* is released into the air in the smell.[2] It goes into the sky and, Demi said, the rain ' fears ' it. (*Koa*, the word ' to fear ', means to respect, to avoid, as when something is taboo, and to be afraid of.) When a person's urine is burned, it also carries the *n/ow* of the person into the sky.

/Kung informants told us that it would be possible to use the *n/ow* of persons to control the weather, should there be need. If the big rains were unusually late and the people were suffering from the dryness, or if the rain storms were so frequent and heavy that the people had much trouble hunting and gathering veldkos, or if a storm were especially frightening, they might try to start or stop the rain. A person known with certainty to have a rain-bringing *n/ow*, because the weather at his birth had given evidence of it, could be asked either to urinate in the fire or to burn some of his hair. The smell of his urine or hair would go up into the sky and influence the rain to come. A person with a cold-bringing *n/ow* could be asked to do the same to stop the rain, if this were wanted.

We have no observations on who would instigate the burning of urine or hair to control the weather. We did not see it done. No one in a /Kung community is a specialist in rain-making, nor has anyone special authority in making a decision about the control of weather. The medicine men (*shamen*) have as their function the curing of the people, not the control of weather. It would be in keeping with the practice of the /Kung of this region, as we observed it in other connexions, for the group to come to a consensus by talking the matter over informally as they sat by their fires, and then for the parents or someone else to bid a child urinate in the fire. It seems to us unlikely that an individual would make the decision entirely alone, without speaking

[1] Ibid., p. 399.
[2] Cf. a myth about the Rain Bull, which refers to the smell of burning horns, p. 239.

623 821 789 about it to others, unless it were a hunter caught in a storm alone in the veld; but an individual, even without necessarily expressing a consensus, we think might say to another, 'Why don't you burn some of your hair?', which would probably be enough to instigate the act. And, in all likelihood, it would be done with so little formality that the observer would not know anything was happening unless he knew what to watch for and were alerted.

[171 821 789 There was no ceremony regularly performed by the /Kung of Nyae Nyae to ensure plentiful rain, like the Hottentots' *guri≠ab*. The Rain dance of the /Kung, which is danced often, all through the year, is a medicine dance, among several others, such 535 as the Giraffe, Sun, Gemsbok, Honey, and Mamba dances. All these are 'strong' 796 things, the /Kung believe. The dances so named have 'strong' medicine music. They 755 are danced during the medicine men's ceremony to cure the sick and protect the people and drive away any of the *//ganasi*, the spirits of the dead, who might be lurking to bring some evil upon the people. The Rain dance has this as its purpose, not the control of weather.

One night when the Rain dance was being beautifully danced with a fine precision and vigour of clapping, singing, and stamping, which to us suggested fervour, we were watching it so intently that we had not noticed the sky. The first storm of the season had crept up behind us and suddenly burst over us like a bomb. We asked [82] Gao if he believed the dance had brought the rain. He said that the rain was due to come. The dance had not brought it.

821 825 A *n/ow* animal, as well as a human, has either a good or a bad *n/ow*, but it seems not to be known clearly how it gets the one or the other. Good or bad *n/ow* is not correlated with one sex or one species. One giraffe, for example, either male or female, may have the rain-bringing, another the cold-bringing kind.

It seems that long or short horns may have something to do with good or bad *n/ow*, not the long-hornedness of gemsbok as compared with the short-hornedness of giraffes, but, within the species, the comparative length of horn. But one kind of *n/ow* is not inherent in short-hornedness nor is the other kind in long-hornedness. It is not so simple as that. And informants did not know what association, if any, the short or long horns may have with ≠Toma's vague idea that the short or long legs of a child in the womb might have something to do with the child's *n/ow*.

When a hunter kills a *n/ow* animal, he either *≠gani*(s) or *//ghui*(s) it. Like the mother who *≠gani*(s) or *//ghui*(s) her child at birth, the hunter has no voluntary control over this and cannot tell which he has done unless the effect is observed in the weather. A hunter with good or bad *n/ow* may *≠gani* or *//ghui* an animal which has either good or bad *n/ow* and long or short horns. The precise nature of the interaction remains obscure, but hunters took an interest in telling about the kind of *n/ow* they thought they had, and gave instances of observing the effects of their killing various types of animals. If a man should kill a female kudu with short horns and the water should freeze that night, it would be evident that he had *//ghui*(ed) the animal. He would expect to continue to *//ghui* short-horned female kudus. However, although a man's *n/ow* remains constant throughout his life, the way it interacts with other factors may change, and after a time he may find he has begun to *≠gani* short-horned female kudus. We think the /Kung became a little tired of our finding this complicated.

One day in September the sun blazed in the clear sky. The heat beat down upon us.

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A party of /Kung men had gone hunting towards the west. John, our son, was with them. In the afternoon there appeared in the western sky three little white clouds, like three powder-puffs in a neat row. They were the first clouds to be seen since the big rains had ended in March. We ran to each other, pointing them out. People felt happy. In the evening, when the hunters returned, ≠Toma came at once to me, before he put down his bow and quiver, and said that I could see for myself what it meant to ≠*gani* an animal. John had ≠*gani*(ed) the wildebeest he shot, and the clouds had appeared immediately above them. ≠Toma said this was what he had been trying all along to explain to me.

If a hunter knows with certainty that he has ≠*gani*(ed) or ǁ*ghui*(ed) an animal, as it was known when John killed the wildebeest that he had ≠*gani*(ed) it, he may take the horns and the scalp and forehead bone and hang them in a tree, remembering where they are and whether they had been ≠*gani*(ed) or ǁ*ghui*(ed). If need should arise he could get the horns which were appropriate to the need and burn them in a specially made fire away from the cooking-fires. He would take a piece of the burning horn and point it to the sky saying '*goichi goichi goichi n!ow qui*'. This we were told is 'speaking *n!ow*'. The interpreters did not know and could not find out by questioning people what the words mean. We wonder if they are an archaic spell. The horns must be entirely consumed by the fire.

In *Bushman Folklore*[1] there is a reference to the burning of horns in a very interesting myth about the Rain Bull, related to Dr. Bleek in 1878 by a Bushman from Strontbergen (30° S., 22° E.) whose dialect included the fifth click of the southern group, as the Katkop dialect does. In this myth a young woman cleverly saves herself from being carried away on the back of the Rain Bull to the water-pit where she would have been turned into a frog, and all of her people also would have become frogs. At the end of the myth the informant who related it said, 'The old women who had been out seeking food were those who came to burn horns, while they desired that the smell of the horns should go up, so that the Rain should not be angry with them.'

A hunter has another way of controlling the weather. To bring rain he would cut the throat of an animal he had reason to believe he habitually ≠*gani*(ed), or to stop rain, one he habitually ≠*ghui*(ed). The blood, which is ordinarily saved and eaten, would be allowed to flow on to the ground. A giraffe is the best animal for blood-letting. The forms and colours of the clouds are like giraffes, the /Kung remarked. We asked if human beings cut themselves and used their blood to start or stop rain as they do their urine or hair. The /Kung said, No, they did not. That would be unnecessarily painful.

As far as we know the /Kung did not attempt to control the weather by these means while we were with them, as they did not resort to burning urine or hair of persons. Perhaps this was because the weather took its normal, expected, seasonal course. Furthermore, we did not experience its most severe extremes for very long periods, and found it on the whole quite bearable. Or perhaps the concept of controlling weather by means of burning urine, hair or horns or letting blood, exists more in lore than in active practice. Or perhaps the long unchanging months do not stimulate the idea of actively attempting to control weather and the people content themselves with explaining rather than controlling. They appeared in many instances to have the

[1] Bleek and Lloyd, op. cit., pp. 193 ff.

789 attitude of accepting resignedly what befell. It seemed to be in keeping with their
821 habits of thought that Gao said to us, ' When Bara comes (the season of the rains) and the ruins do not fall, we desire and wait.'

Résumé

LE N/OW

000 Le *N/ow* est une croyance des Boschimans /Kung de la région autour de Nyae Nyae, dans l'Afrique Sud-ouest, touchant la pluie et le froid. Il tombe dix pouces environ de pluie au cours d'une année moyenne dans cette partie du désert du Kalahari, ce qui est suffisant pour maintenir une végétation de couverture comprenant de l'herbe, des arbustes et des arbrisseaux. Cette végétation, désignée *veldkos* en langue taal, comprend de nombreuses racines, feuilles, fruits et noix comestibles. Les /Kung, seuls habitants de l'intérieur de cette région, sont des nomades qui vivent de la chasse et de la cueillette. Ils ont à subir de grandes difficultés si les pluies sont insuffisantes et il en résulte que le veldkos est sec et épars. Ils disent que la pluie est vivifiante et que le soleil est mortel. Les grandes pluies tombent en été; elles commencent fin décembre ou en janvier et persistent jusqu'en mars; quelques averses rares tombent quelquefois au cours des mois de septembre, octobre et novembre. Les /Kung considèrent les nuages minces, qui ne donnent pas de pluie, comme étant du sexe masculin, et les gros nuages comme des femelles. La pluie elle-même est mâle ou femelle suivant la force avec laquelle elle tombe. Les mois d'automne qui suivent les pluies sont les meilleurs mois de l'année et les /Kung parcourent la région en faisant la chasse et la cueillette du veldkos nouveau. L'hiver est la saison sèche, avec un soleil brûlant pendant le jour et un froid glacial pendant la nuit; la plupart des mares se tarissent. Le *n/ow* est une chose qui influence les conditions atmosphériques et on l'appelle ' néfaste ' s'il apporte le froid et ' bon ' s'il apporte la pluie. Le *n/ow* n'est pas visible, mais on croit qu'il est présent dans tous les êtres humains et dans certains grands animaux; toutefois, il n'existe dans rien d'autre. Le bon ou le mauvais *n/ow* s'introduit dans un enfant avant sa naissance et il demeure chez cet individu pendant toute sa vie. Il n'y a aucun moyen de modifier l'espèce de *n/ow* qu'une personne possède et ce *n/ow* n'est pas héréditaire. L'espèce de *n/ow* est révélée en observant les conditions atmosphériques au moment de la naissance de l'enfant, ou peu de temps après. Le *n/ow* d'un être humain peut aussi influencer les conditions atmosphériques au moment de sa mort. Il existe dans le corps et il est associé avec le liquide utérin, l'urine, et la chevelure. L'association entre la chevelure et les nuages est constatée parmi d'autres tribus boschimans, mais le rapport n'est pas très clairement défini chez les /Kung. Ils croient qu'une partie du *n/ow* appartenant à un individu se trouve dans la chevelure et que lorsque les cheveux (ou l'urine) sont consumés dans le feu le *n/ow* est dégagé dans l'air avec l'odeur. Il monte au ciel et la pluie ' en a peur '. De cette façon, il deviendrait possible d'utiliser le *n/ow* des gens pour faire tomber ou arrêter la pluie. Étant donné que les /Kung n'ont pas de ' faiseurs de pluie ' officiels, ni de rites pour invoquer la pluie, la cérémonie aurait probablement lieu d'une façon officieuse, de manière à échapper à l'attention des observateurs. Les animaux peuvent également avoir un bon ou un mauvais *n/ow* mais le fait d'en posséder un n'a aucun rapport avec le sexe ou une espèce quelconque. Un chasseur peut tuer un animal, de façon à influer sur les conditions atmosphériques, mais, dans ce cas, c'est une question de chance et non pas de choix. Il peut également garder les cornes et les brûler, afin d'invoquer la pluie, ou trancher la gorge de l'animal en laissant le sang couler par terre. Cependant, les /Kung n'ont fait usage d'aucune de ces méthodes pendant le temps que l'auteur est resté parmi eux, sans doute parce que le temps a suivi son cours normal ou parce que les /Kung sont habitués à accepter ce qui advient.

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
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GiKwe

Bushmen believe that certain famous sorcerers, once medicine men who chose to be poisoners and magicians instead of healers, have taken the form of certain lions, which can always be distinguished from ordinary lions by their great size and their ability to float in the air. Also, Bushmen say, the eclipses of the moon are caused by lions, as on very bright nights a lion may cover the moon's face with a great paw, giving himself darkness for better hunting.

Usually, when a lion sees you, he skulks away or bounds off in great, ungainly leaps, in clumsy dodges, making a fool of himself because he is frightened; but when one raises his head and looks right at you, then turns as this one did, and walks off without even looking back, you understand at once why Bushmen believe the things they do.

As the lion walked away into a thicket of acacia trees we climbed off the truck and followed him. It was rash of us, but we were not afraid of him. We wanted a photograph. However, he had disappeared, and as we were looking cautiously around among the trunks of little trees we heard a motor roaring, gears grinding; and finally, as we watched, the jeep arrived with Cass and Bob (Dr. Story), who told us to go back to camp as fast as we could. Two Bushmen had arrived.

We started back at once and got there late in the afternoon, and there we found them, two small men, one old, one young, in silhouette as they squatted by the fire, turning as we came to look at us, very nervous and very ill at ease. They had been given food and tobacco—a blue cloud hung above their heads—and a bucket of water, but during the course of the afternoon they had drunk the bucket dry. As Theunis and Gishe, the only people who could have spoken to both them and us, had been away, the rest of the expedition had had to wait anxiously for our return, unable to communicate a single word.

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
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ing great carcasses of fallen trees, some with the leaves on the top still green, that were filling the air with the smell of their wood burning. The ground was still warm to walk on, but all the bushes, all the little succulents, all the vines that marked the water roots were gone; no snake or lizard or animal was there, all were burned or had gone; we saw only animal tracks half filled with ashes, and a few birds come to eat dead insects. We saw a pair of secretary birds and later a pair of paouw, huge gray birds that walk more than they fly, wandering through the ruins looking for dead reptiles.

As we walked, fine black powder rose to dust our legs, and now and then, off through the standing tree trunks and between the fallen trees' great upflung roots, little whirlwinds crossed back and forth, raising the dust in spiraled pillars. Bushmen say that whirlwinds show the presence of the spirits of the dead.

Witabe's eyes searched over the ground, and when he saw a small mound of earth he walked up to it and punctured it with his toe. Out rushed a horde of ants, which had been safe in their tunnels when the fire passed and now began at once to repair their damaged mound. Witabe crouched among them and began to pick and eat them, selecting the soldier ants, ones with large heads and heavy jaws. He bit off the abdomens, tossing the heads away. Presently he offered some to us, as I had feared he would; as everyone else ate one, I did also, and found that it was not too unpleasant but sour and very watery, very like a blackberry before it is ripe. The workers, I am told, are tasteless, but the fighters are considered a near-delicacy; mine opened her jaws wide to fight my thumb before I ate her.

Later in the day, when the sun in the sky, the still burning trees, and the fire-warmed sand made the air on the flats unbearably hot, we turned back to camp for the shade of our

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
GiKwe

women because, say the men, women's voices are admirably beautiful.

Twikwe and Tsetchwe sat side by side, their legs straight out in front of them, the soles of their feet lit by the fire. They sang gaily and clapped their hands while the baby Nhwakwe walked up and down on Tsetchwe's leg, balancing himself like a child who is walking on a railing, then climbed to her shoulder and stood there triumphantly without holding on, gazing around like a child on a hill. He looked utterly astonished when Tsetchwe suddenly swept him to the ground and, flinging off her cape, jumped to her feet and began to dance. Everyone was astonished. Women almost never dance, although they are quite welcome to, but least of all Tsetchwe, a very conscientious mother and wife.

Tsetchwe's dance was extremely lively and extremely gay, and everyone except Nhwakwe looked up at her happily. She sang and waved her arms with great abandon, and danced her gay dance right behind the men, just for once flinging motherhood to the four winds and dancing right over her baby, who came trotting sadly after her, holding up his arms to be carried. In a moment the baby gave up and went to the lap of his grandmother, frowning as his mother danced happily by him again. When Tsetchwe finally got tired and flung herself down on the ground he ran to her and nursed immediately to reassure himself. She held him loosely in one arm as she coughed from exertion and laughed, with a pleased, shy expression on her face that said: this is what I used to do when I was younger.

When the people were tired of dancing they still seemed to feel like talking, and as the moon was down and the stars showed clearly we asked Ukwane to tell us something about the sky, and we pointed to several stars to learn their names.

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
GiKwe

●821 But Ukwane said that he had been talking and singing all evening and his voice was hoarse from telling about the inside of the springbok (which by now was partly cooked and eaten). He was, in fact, too hoarse to answer questions and would rather tell a story if he had to talk. We said that
539 we would like to hear a story, and the Bushmen said that they would also like to hear some stories, so Ukwane told the last part of the story of Pishiboro and his elephant wife.

In the morning, after the elephant wife had frightened Pishiboro and his younger brother, before she had followed them away, she had told her elephant parents that she had married a man whose people might eat her, and that they should give up hope of ever seeing her again. Pishiboro knew that she had spoken with her parents, and while he was sitting upon her body with his brother, eating the breast, he looked around anxiously for he knew not what. Soon some elephant beetles came up to eat the uterus, for the elephant wife was pregnant, and when Pishiboro saw this he became very alarmed that the fetus would be eaten and he asked his brother to chase the beetles away. But the brother did not, and when Pishiboro was looking the other way, seeming to have forgotten, the brother cut open the womb, and the fetus came out.

"Oh, you foolish man," said Pishiboro. "I told you not to do that. You are lazy and stupid, and now the fetus will go to the elephant's parents and say what we have done."

Pishiboro then asked his brother to dig a hole to catch the fluid from the womb, but when the brother went to do this the fluid flowed past him. Pishiboro scrambled to dig another hole, but the fluid flowed past him, too, and only a little was caught. Pishiboro and his brother drank it.

The large part of the fluid went on until it came to the

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
GiKwe

159 right, saying that Gai may have *thought* the Bakalahari was his real father, but that Ukwane knew better. I expect that Ukwane was right at that, for Gai certainly looked like a Bushman.

But whether father or stepfather, Gai said, the Bakalahari kept sending messages to Gai with Bushmen who might be passing through Ai a ha'o telling him to come back to Chukudu (probably to work), but Gai never did. Gai was too clever.

512 At noon the sun had warmed the air a little, although there was still an edge of frost, and the women got up and walked [313] off together into the veld to search for wood. In an hour or so they came back heavily loaded, Tsetchwe with her kaross [482 854] bulging with melons, perhaps twenty in all, a great load of wood on top of them piled higher than her head, and Nhwakwe riding on top of it all. Even in the cold air she perspired, and as her load must have weighed almost a hundred pounds, she walked leaning forward.

By night the cold had deepened. The Bushman boys came [513] out of my tent and went home for dinner, then lay by the fires to sleep when the adults curled up in the shallow pits. The moon rose, a frosty circle, hard as a coin, and before we went to sleep that night we heard a jackal calling "tsa," out on the plains.

"Tsa," called one of the Bushmen, answering him.

"Tsa!" the jackal replied.

● 821 In the morning we were very pleased to find that the cold had broken. We woke up to find the sun just rising, and on the other edge the moon just sinking down, lustrous and pale in a current of balmy air coming warm from the equator. In the east, only the planets showed of all the stars; one of them,

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
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"Walks-Before-the-Sun," was just starting its journey across 821
the sky. This planet, which we call the morning star and which is a different one from time to time, rises just before the sun and walks all day across the sky looking for shade. Every day, say Bushmen, the sun overtakes it and scorches it, and though people walking can cut branches from trees to [243]
put up over their heads as parasols, the poor star finds no branches in the sky.

Over the moon the Firewood Star was sinking too. This is a real star, the star by which the Bushmen, when they see it rising, can tell if they have enough firewood to last the night.

When the sun was up, when the moon and all the stars 281
were gone, we went as usual to the werf, where we found 237
Ukwane curing fox skins with urine, the only liquid he had. It was not fresh urine either; it was rank, saved for days by all the people, collected in tsama rinds. We had noticed a stench, but we had not known what it was. To be certain, we asked Ukwane, and he said: "Water."

"What water?" we asked, knowing there was none.

"The water that all the people in the Kalahari have to use."

"Is it urine?"

"Yes, it is," he said.

The skins were from five Delalandes or long-eared foxes which Ukwane had snared three seasons ago. He had stretched and scraped the skins but had not cured them because until now he had not had the time. A few days ago he had told his people to begin saving urine so that he could cure and soften the hides. They had, and he now poured urine onto each skin, letting it soak, then rubbed the skin hard between his hands. He repeated this process again and again, 281
working one skin at a time, and before long the skins were moist all through, and when they were dry they were as soft as chamois. Ukwane said that he was going to trade the soft

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
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825 mash the insides, then pull off the head and squeeze the in-
278 sides out like toothpaste from a tube. Both kinds of poison are equally good, they say.

Perhaps the two types of pupae are the pupae of two different kinds of beetles. Perhaps they are from the same beetle but in different stages of development. Perhaps they really are males and females, as Bushmen are often scientifically
● [821] accurate, but, as Bushmen also have male and female rain clouds, perhaps not.

[439] Kung Bushmen, who use metal arrows obtained by trading
824 animal skins for wire with the Bantus, have a complicated
825 system of poisoning in which they use several ingredients for
278 the poison paste. One of these is a binding fluid, used because the pure poison squeezed from the grub will not adhere well to metal but must be made binding and sticky. The binding material comes from the bark of a tree. They chew
[415 the bark thoroughly and spit the mash into a little mortar
237] made from the knee bone of an antelope, a nice little cup, into which the Bushmen have squeezed the milky juice of sansevieria plants, got by wringing the heavy, thick leaves. This juice has an irritating effect when it is dissolved in a wound and causes the antelope to rub and scratch its wounded spot against a tree, which stimulates circulation in the area, which carries the poison more quickly through the body, which hastens death.

The paste in the mortar is thoroughly mixed, then smeared with a straw on the foreshaft of arrows, never on the head, for if the sharp edges of the head were poisoned any child might accidentally nick himself and die. When the arrow is poisoned it is propped up by a fire and the poison is allowed to dry into a shiny dark paste, to be melted again by the
411 moisture and warmth of an antelope's flank.
825
278 Gai had stored his poison cocoons in a tiny bag inside his

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
GiKwe

this did no good he endured the nuisance for a moment, then flung himself down on his back, put up his long legs like a fighting cock, and kicked the branches down.

He dug out a great deal of earth, throwing it behind him, and finally uncovered a *ga* root, big and dark with a warty surface all covered with lumps like a toad or a stone; a fascinating thing, for although it was large and nondescript, brownish gray in brown-gray sand, marked only by an old dry vine, it was life itself to Bushmen, bitter but quite moist even in the hottest season. Tsetchwe put the root in her kaross and we went off, Gai generously carrying the baby, taking him from Tsetchwe by the forearm and swinging him up to his shoulder. The baby rode astride Gai's neck with the soft kaross he wore draped over Gai's head. From the rear they were an apparition, as this made the baby's head, not much higher than Gai's, look like a tiny head on a man's tall, slender body.

We wanted very much to find a bi root, and while Gai, the baby, and my brother went off to look for one I waited behind with the women. We rested in a small circle in the dim shade of the grass, which, when we were sitting, came high above our heads so that all we could see was a circle of sky and, in the circle, the ragged, waxing moon. It had risen luxuriously in the daytime and was a pale, large crescent, pearl-colored in the sun. The moon is a root with a climbing stalk, a vine. It can be eaten.

Giamakwe began to urinate right in our midst, crouching and pulling his loincloth aside. Although the adults are slightly inhibited about this, the children are not, sometimes simply turning aside to urinate as one might turn aside to cough. Presently the young boys got up and ran away, and when they did Tsetchwe herself got to her feet, stepped aside, and urinated also, standing up but leaning forward. Bushman

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
GiKwe

We had stayed up to watch the children's games and also to observe Orion setting, for the Bushmen tell a story of the stars in Orion which takes place in the sky every night at certain seasons and we wanted to see it for ourselves. The story is simply that the god, who at the time the story takes place is standing on one of the Magellan clouds, shoots an arrow at three zebras. The arrow is Orion's sword, the zebras are the three stars of Orion's belt, the star in the center being a male zebra and the two stars flanking him his wives. The arrow falls short, as one can see, and presently, as the constellation touches the horizon, the zebras step upon the earth, first a female, then the male, then the other female. It is slow and deliberate, and that night we saw it plainly. The zebras vanished into the brush at the horizon, but the arrow was still there.

When the constellation had gone, when many of the people were asleep and we were about to leave the werf, Ukwane took out his hunting-bow and, setting one tip on a dry melon shell, he began to tap the string with a reed, making a sound. Soon he played a song, humming a melody and playing an accompaniment on his bow.

He sat alone at his fire, his wife a tiny heap under her kaross and fast asleep some distance away. He was squatting, his eyes on the embers of his fire, holding one end of the bow with his toes. With the fingers of one hand he touched the string, making different notes, and when he wanted to change the pitch he turned his head slightly, catching the other end of the string with his chin.

His song was a mood piece, as are all Bushman songs except the medicine songs. It was a song of pure music without words, a song composed to express a feeling the composer had had, a mood, or an emotion. The mood songs do have names or titles, but these only tell the subject of the piece,

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
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Kung
Gikwe

764 775 move away because they cannot bear to leave the dead person, because they want to make sure that animals do not spoil his body, and because, said Ukwane, "He is our person, whom we love. We do not want to leave until we have given up hope."

764 775 789 824 We learned one other thing, and that was that the Gikwe put a medicine power, a fragrant brown powder made of an herb called *sasa*, in the norstrils of the dead person, and sprinkled his body with sasa before the burial. This, said Ukwane, is done to ensure heavy rain in the rainy season, but also it may well have to do with protecting the living from the spirit of the dead. We did not learn more about this because Bushmen will talk about any subject you may name except the subject of the spirits of the dead. The Kung respect and fear spirits more than any other thing, and only after a year of trying did we learn about them; the Gikwe seem to feel the same way, and for that reason we did not expect to learn very much. We did find, however, that the spirits 775 of the dead are called, at least sometimes, the *kwe be ha ki* (person who is not here), and that these spirits travel in the ● [82] wind—not in open, blowing wind, but in whirlwinds; that is why the Gikwe Bushmen avoid whirlwinds, because a spirit might be there to carry them away. Once a whirlwind passing through our camp uprooted a tent and carried it spinning to the sky. Possibly, explained the Bushmen, a spirit of the dead thought that there was a person inside, although sometimes the spirits cause only mischief.

764 184 With the Kung, the funeral customs are very much the same as those of the Gikwe. The body is folded into a sitting position and bound, but the head is bowed down to the knees. Beads and a kaross ornament the body, which is also lowered into the grave and buried upright, but thereafter the custom

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10

775 great god as a messenger to bring disease and death to people, or to lead them to game and honey, depending on the great god's whim.

The Kung do not consider the gauas to be either happy or sad in their roles after life, but lonely and neutral, roaming above the veld either singly or in twos, on little paths of theirs, little invisible threads like spider webs, that run through the air. Whenever Bushmen have their great night-time medicine dances, the gauas are present, just out of sight in the dark among the trees, and whenever there is a ring around the moon the Bushmen know that the gauas themselves are dancing, for the moon is their dance fire, the ring is the circle made by their dancing feet.

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823 when he is, it is because he has brought evil, sickness, catas-
776 trophe, or death.

The old god still exists, the Bushmen know him, but his presence is diffusing; he, the old power of evil, is becoming faint, his entity obscure.

● 821 In the west live the *kwa kwa kwara* (knee knee nothing),
776 the people with no knees. These people have no knee joints,
823 but must stand up always. At night when the sun sets, the people with no knees catch it and kill it, for the sun is meat. They put it in a pot, and when it is cooked they tell their children to run off and play, and when the children are gone the people with no knees eat it. When the children come back, the people with no knees pick their teeth and give what they remove to the children, and then the people with no knees take the shoulder blade of the sun and throw it back into the east again, where a new sun grows and rises in the morning. If a tall man throws it you are aware of nothing, but if a short man throws it you can hear it whirring overhead. We knew a Kung Bushman man who, said he, had been to the west and had visited the people with no knees. He had been very interested to see them and very curious to know how they slept at night, for he did not imagine that they could lie down, so when darkness came he had watched and waited, and, just as he had suspected, when they had finished the sun they did not lie down but leaned against forks of the trees, where they rested, propped.

825 In the north is a great river, the Okovango, and Bantu peo-
776 ple live there. In the south live the gemsbok people, who are not ordinary gemsbok but beings in gemsbok form. It was these beings who taught the Bushmen how to make ostrich-eggshell beads, for when making a bead the gemsbok people use their long horns to bore the hole in the center. The gemsbok people often wear strings of beads around their necks.

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
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The gemsbok people look just like gemsbok. When Bushmen are hunting they must be very careful not to mistake these people for ordinary gemsbok, because if a hunter should shoot a gemsbok person even by accident he would get very sick and die. But such accidents are rare, for if a group of gemsbok people are out grazing and notice that a Bushman hunter is drawing his bow at them, they will say to him: "Do not shoot us, we are not gemsbok," and the hunter will naturally leave them alone.

Under the world is another world just like this one, with trees and omarambas, hills and pans, a sun and a moon, Bushmen, Bantus, and Europeans just like the people here, and the bottom of our world is that world's sky. There is no other connection between our world and the lower world except possibly through certain deep waterholes, for it was through a waterhole that the great god climbed from that world when he first came here.

Over the world, of course, is the sky, and there is nothing above that. The sun, which is not only meat but a death-giving agent because it burns the veld and dries up the waterholes, is a male, and the moon when it is full is female. A crescent moon, called *nui ma ze* (moon small new), is male, and so are the great destructive thunderheads that bring hailstorms or electric storms which break down dwellings and flatten the grass. The soft gray clouds that carry land rains which blow like mists into the plants of the veld and make them grow are female. The rain of male and female clouds is itself male or female, depending on the cloud's gender or on whether the rain is creative or destructive, but if you can't tell from the rain as it falls you can tell from its footprints, for male rain leaves sharp, pierced marks in the dust and female rain leaves wide, soft splashes. And as for the stars, they are called by some the eyes of dead people and by others are

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
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said to be ant lions which at night rise from the bottoms of their little traps of sand.

Since we had lived a year in Nyae Nyae we knew the round of the seasons, which Kung Bushmen say are six in number. We came there in July, in winter and the start of the drought, the coldest season. August was bitterly cold and also dry, but in September the air began to get warmer and heralded the next season, called "little winds before the rain," a season of whirlwinds, drought, and clouds of dust. In October, suddenly and presenting a startling sight, a thorn tree near our camp turned quite green and the heat began to be intense. This was the start of the springtime, the dryest, hottest time of all the year and a time of starvation, for the water in the waterholes gets very low until only a little remains on the bottoms and the wild roots push sap into their vines so that the vines turn green and sprout but the roots themselves are shriveled. This was the worst season of the year for the people. Before this, during the winter, the large extended band that we had gone to visit was separated into little family groups that were scattered through the veld, living at little waterholes that did not keep their water all year long. During the dry season the water in these waterholes vanished, causing the small family bands to gather at the last sure waterhole of the area, a waterhole called Gautscha, which was beside a huge flat pan called Gautscha Pan.

There was one rather large band that always lived at Gautscha and numbered some forty people, who divided themselves into sometimes three, sometimes four family groups. They thought themselves lucky to live there, for Gautscha was considered to be a sort of paradise, where the waterhole was cool and deep, and (it was said) game gathered at all times to lick the salt, for Gautscha was a salt pan. It was the salt that made Gautscha most desirable, because salt is

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
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584 One day the young man killed a little buck and, according to custom, gave most of it to his bride's parents, thus proving that he hunted well and would provide for them and their daughter. With this the engagement was sealed. Shortly after-
585 ward the mothers of the bride and groom built a scherm for the young couple which they furnished with wood and water and enlivened with a fire, kindled by brands from their own fires. Very early the following day the bride's mother adorned
[301 822] the bride, washing her, hanging white bead ornaments from
831 her hair, rubbing her clothing with red, sweet-smelling powder, a symbol to Bushmen of beauty. Then, sitting her upon one large kaross, they covered her with another and left her to spend the day motionless, waiting for evening, when the union would take place.

788 It is common in Bushman ceremonies for a person at a transitional moment of life to be raised from the ground and hidden from the sun, as though suspended between earth and sky. Young people on the day of their first marriage are
[84] protected in this way; so are newborn babies, and so are girls on the day of their first menstruation. At a funeral, too, the body before burial is covered and raised from the ground, and perhaps all this is because a person is especially susceptible to damage at times of life when change is taking place, when, perhaps, a person is as delicate and fragile as a new moth emerged from a cocoon.

585 Because the sun brings death, no ceremony or part of any
[821 761] ceremony is performed when the sun is strong; but when evening came and the sun itself was dying, the groom was led to his new home by his three brothers, who took him by the hands and pulled him there, forced him, for custom demanded that he show reluctance. The bride, according to custom, refused to go to her husband and had to be picked up by another little girl and carried to him. In the drama of re-

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
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and wipes it clean with grass. Then the mother collects the stained grass, the placenta, and the bloody sand and covers them all with stones or branches, marking the spot with a tuft of grass stuck up in a bush so that no man will step on or over the place, for the ground where a child has been born is tainted with a power so strong that any man infected with it would lose an aspect of his masculinity, would lose his power to hunt. The woman does not bury the placenta, for if she did she would lose her ability to bear more children.

The moment of birth is a very important one for the child and for the mother; it is at this moment that the child acquires a power, or an essence, over which he has no control, although he can make use of it. It will last him all his life; it is a supernatural essence that forever after connects the person born with certain forces in the world around him: with weather, with childbearing, with the great game antelope, and with death, and this essence is called the *now*.

There are two kinds of *now*, a rainy or cold one and a hot or dry one. If a person has a wet *now* and burns his hair in a fire or urinates in a fire, the person's *now* is said to make the weather turn cold (if it is the dry season) or bring rain (if it is the rainy season). If a person has a dry *now* and burns hair or urinates in a fire, the *now* is said to stop a cold spell or a bad storm. When a person dies, too, the weather changes violently according to the person's *now*. After a death, scorching droughts or devastating storms are sure to follow.

We knew a Bushman woman at Gautscha whose young son was living not with her but far away with the family of his infant wife, and once, when a rainstorm came so violently that branches were splintered from the trees and water ran in torrents like waterfalls over the rocks beside the pan, the woman began to pine and grieve for her son, who, she felt

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
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778 sure, was dead. At last a visitor came from her son's band
821 who assured her that her son was safe and well, and she knew then that the storm was not for his *now*, loose in the air, but possibly for the *now* of someone else, though when she heard the news it did not matter to her who might have died, for she was happy.

The effect of *now* is simple when a person dies, or when a person burns his hair or urinates to change the weather. With childbearing for women and with killing the great antelope
825 for men (as the great antelope also have *now*, although the small ones do not) the *now* has a larger, more complex effect. In these cases the *now* of the hunter interacts with the *now* of the antelope, the *now* of the woman interacts with the *now* of the child newly born, and when the blood of the antelope falls upon the ground as the antelope is killed, when the fluid of the womb falls upon the ground at the child's birth, the interaction of *nows* takes place, and this brings a change in the weather. In this way a mother may bring rain or drought when she bears a child, a hunter may bring rain or drought when he kills an antelope, no matter what kind of *now* the mother or the hunter may have. The mother or the hunter can only watch the weather to see what has taken place.

Now is intangible, mystic, and diffuse, and Bushmen themselves do not fully understand its workings. They do not know how or why *now* changes weather but only that it does. They watch the changes carefully, though, and by observing have discovered the limits of their own *nows*. When the fluid from a mother's womb falls upon the ground the child's *now* is determined, and it is partly for this reason that birth is such a mighty thing.

844 Birth is usually joyous. Bushmen of all ages adore their children and grandchildren, placing a child's health and

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
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521 lifted her head and her face showed in the firelight; her eyes shone quite yellow and she looked dangerous, like a leopard, as she glared in the direction of his voice.

361 342 On my way home I passed Lazy Kwi's house, which his wife had started in his absence, and as she had planned a large scherm and had already built the framework, many large branches stuck upright in the ground, but had not yet covered it with grass, I could see Lazy Kwi inside. He was between me and his fire, and in silhouette against the red light he looked like a creature in a cage, for he was peering through the lattice of branches to see who was passing by. I stopped 252 to show who I was, and noticed a bird roasting by his fire, a little duck which must have been snared by Lazy Kwi's old father-in-law. It was plucked and trussed and tied to a stick which was pushed into the ground so that the duck hung over the coals. It looked about done to me, so I asked Lazy Kwi, who was obviously alone with it, awake only to tend it, if it wasn't ready, and Lazy Kwi looked first at me, then at the 805 821 duck, then up at the sky, and shook his head. He was timing it by a star, he explained, and the star had risen but wasn't high enough yet, so I said good-night and went home and left him in his lattice; and just before I went to sleep I heard great shouts of laughter, for Toma had found someone who hadn't heard the lion story and was telling it again.

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/KUNG BUSHMAN RELIGIOUS BELIEFS[1]

LORNA MARSHALL

MY purpose in this paper is to describe some of the religious beliefs held currently by the /Kung Bushmen of the interior bands of the Nyae Nyae region of South West Africa. I shall limit the paper to a description of their concepts of the gods, the problem of evil, supplication, the spirits of the dead, and the ceremonial curing dance, but leave for another paper a more detailed account of medicine men, how they become medicine men, and more about their practices and beliefs. We gathered the information which I present principally on our expeditions of 1952–3 and 1955.

Schapera traces considerable borrowing in the past by the Bushmen from Hottentots and Bergdama.[2] I did not have opportunity to trace, to any significant extent, possible present-day borrowing or exchange of ideas, and can only report that contact, and therefore opportunity for exchange, takes place between the interior bands of /Kung in the Nyae Nyae region and the Tswana and Herero on the border of the Bechuanaland Protectorate. The /Kung have contact also, but much less frequently, with Makaukau (Auen) Bushmen to the south and through them to some extent with Naron in the Ghanzi region of the Bechuanaland Protectorate. The /Kung of Nyae Nyae occasionally see /Kung to the north of their region, who in turn see the Okavango and Ovambo tribes. Although the Nyae Nyae /Kung had not enough contact with white people before we came to absorb any Christian ideas directly from them, and no Christian missionary has been in the interior of the region, an influence of Christianity cannot be precluded because the Tswana do have contact with Christianity. Our own highly valued interpreter, Kernel Ledimo, who grew up near the border and spoke Bushman from his childhood, had been educated in an Anglican mission school. Although there has been contact with people who have Christian ideas, I do not recognize with certainty any Christian elements among /Kung beliefs.

One is left to wonder if the change in the concept of the nature of the gods, particularly in that of the great god, which appears when one compares the old tales with current concepts, was brought about entirely by the philosophical and logical powers of the /Kung themselves and by their adjustment to emotional needs, or whether influences from without played some part. I hope that the research of others may throw light on this point.

I should like to mention a few of the well-known Bushman beliefs, recorded in the past, which the present Nyae Nyae /Kung do *not* have and then proceed to a more systematic description of beliefs which they hold at present.

The Nyae Nyae /Kung have various beliefs and lore about the sun and moon, Canopus, the Pleiades, and other stars, and they have the well-known myth of the moon and the hare; but they do not attribute active divinity to the heavenly bodies, which are 'just stars', they say in effect, and we did not find that they either fear

[1] We are grateful for a grant towards the publication of this long article.

[2] I. Schapera, *The Khoisan Peoples of South Africa*, London: Routledge, 1930. Reference is particularly to chapter vii.

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821 them or seek to gain beneficent influence from them. As far as we know they do not pray to them for food as the Cape Bushmen are said once to have done, or for rain as the Naron and Auen and /O /Kung do.[1]

The /Kung beliefs about rain, which I do not describe in detail in this paper, include the idea that rain is life-giving and makes the food plants and other vegetation grow, whereas the sun is death-giving. The /Kung do not now formally personify or deify rain or worship it, but may retain a vestige of an ancient personification of rain in praying to it, in a manner of speaking, as they also do to lightning. 'Fall silently, rain. Do not make such a noise. Do not be dangerous', they say. Or, to lightning, 'Do not come against me. Go to the other side.'

825 The /Kung do not attribute divinity to the mantis but, in calling it 'the servant of *Gauwa*', perhaps they preserve a vestige or an echo of the Cape Bushman belief in */kaggen*. If they injure a mantis which is walking on them or throw one into the fire, [753] '*Gauwa* would see this and say that his servant was being ill treated and would punish the person. He would make the person sick'. Mantises are ***chi dole*** (***chi***, thing; ***dole***, bad) not because they harm you—they only prick and tickle you—but because they belong to *Gauwa* and people are afraid of the 'owner'. The old people told them these things. We saw the /Kung hold mantises, however, without exhibiting fear or the uncanny fascinated feeling I had when I watched them (especially the huge female who lived with me, with her consort seemingly permanently attached to her, and fascinated me by never seeming to take her eyes off me as she made her slow and stately progress around the tent at night).

The /Kung react in quite a different way to millepedes. They say there are two kinds. The large one they call ***ko ko chi nahe***; the small one they call ***choba*** or ***zoba***. One day a boy picked up a millepede and threw it toward a group of women. They jumped up and fled, shrieking. Talking about it afterwards, they explained that 'even men are afraid of millepedes'. (We observed several incidents of people jumping and running from them.) [753] They are very dangerous, the /Kung say. If one gets on you, the shock of fright you feel could kill you. 'Millepedes work with *//Gauwa*. He sends them to eat your nose when you are asleep.' If you put a ***choba*** in the fire when the ***n/i*** berries (*Grewia flava* D.C.) are still green, the berries will not ripen [278] properly and will not be sweet. If the /Kung find the ash of a millepede which has been burned in a veld fire and has kept its shape, they take the ash for a medicine. (Cf. Schapera's account that among the Naron and Auen 'the millipede, said to belong to *Hishe*, is only touched by them [magicians]; they dry it and use it powdered as medicine.'[2])

774 825 The /Kung do not believe that animals have spirits or souls or that earthly objects (such as trees or water, for example) are entered by spirits or are themselves animated by having spirits of their own.

787 Divination is a secular practice among the /Kung. The oracle disks may be thrown and read by any man. They are five leather disks about two-and-a-half to three inches in diameter. The man who throws them gathers them into his cupped hands, flings them with a spreading motion on to a kaross on the ground, and reads what they reveal or predict. Different personifications are attributed to the disks, according to what the people want to learn from them. If advice about a hunt is wanted, the

[1] Schapera, *op. cit.*, pp. 176–7. [2] Ibid., p. 197.

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only for females, *kolidi*, a term which one may also apply to women when one wants to be especially polite and to honour them. It is used for women 'who possess lots of things', the /Kung explained. *Gaoxadi*, the female form of one of the respect terms for the gods, may also be applied.

Khwova/na is also called 'the mother of the bees'. When men go to look for honey they pray to her.

'The wives of the gods have the same work as their husbands. Their work is also strong', we were told.

The Names of the Children of the Gods

The names of the six children of the gods are as follows: for the boys—*/Kwa ma, Nami, /Kmg go*; for the girls—*/Kharu, /Nai, /Kow. Nami, /Kharu*, and */Nai* are familiar names to me, the others are not. These names are from Robert Dyson's notes (for which I want to express my gratitude), and it is possible that the name he writes */Kow* is the same as the one I write *//Gow*. As I have said, such questions and discrepancies about words are very common.

In the myths, but not in the /Kung's current account of their beliefs, *≠Gao/na* has two other sons who are involved in many strange events with their father. Their names are *Khan//a* and *Kxoma*. They were turned into the two stars in the vertical axis of the Southern Cross which now bear their names. Alpha Crux is *Khan//a*; Gamma Crux is *Kxoma*.

Miss Bleek was told that *Hishe* was sometimes 'followed by children like baboons'.[1] The image this gives of the divine children leaping and playing and following like infant baboons is amusing. The image which the Nyae Nyae /Kung have, however, is very different. 'The girls are fresh and beautiful', they say, 'not ugly like Bushmen.' Their skin is the colour of Bushman skin but at its lightest shade (*gun*).

The children are called little *//ganwasi* (*si* is the plural suffix). The spirits of the dead are also called *//ganwasi*. It is the children's special duty to carry the spirits of mortals, when they die, from the dead bodies to their 'father in the sky'. We were told that the little *//ganwasi* are helpful to humans. 'They watch over them and help to prevent *≠Gao/na* from getting angry.'

Terms of Respect and Disrespect

In addition to the names, the Nyae Nyae /Kung apply three terms of respectful address to the gods: *gaoxa, n/iha*, and */nan*. As I mentioned in my paper on the structure of bands,[2] the terms *gaoxa* and *n/iha* may be applied also to human chiefs, or to persons who are over others, like a district commissioner, and they are sometimes applied to a Bushman headman, although, to be strictly proper in /Kung, a headman is called *kxau*, 'owner'. *Gaoxa* is the more exalted term. Some informants felt that to call a man *gaoxa* was to compare him to the deity, which might anger the gods. Others felt that it 'sounded like a curse' to call a man *gaoxa*. The term pleases *≠Gao/na*, however. When he hears it applied to himself he knows that the people respect and fear him and 'he has a good feeling about them'.

/Nan among the Nyae Nyae /Kung is a term of respect for any old man and it is

[1] Schapera, op. cit., p. 192.
[2] Cf. Lorna Marshall, '/Kung Bushman Bands,' *Africa*, vol. xxx, no. 4, Oct. 1960, pp. 325–55.

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thought to be the creator. ' The souls of the dead come to live with him, and he eats their hearts.'[1] Hottentots considered him to be wholly the destroyer, the black chief, opposed to *Tsui ǁGoab*, the creator and rain-giver. '. . . it is further said, by the Naman, that " *Tsui ǁGoab* lives in a beautiful heaven, and *ǁGamab* lives in a dark heaven quite separated from the heaven of *Tsui ǁGoab* ", while the Korana told Wuras that *Tsui ǁGoab* lived in the Red Sky and *ǁGamab* in the Black Sky.'[2]

ǁGauwa in past concepts was more independent than now but otherwise he preserves the same mingling of characteristics. He does both good and evil deeds, from man's point of view, with emphasis upon death-giving and evil-doing. He has now become subservient to the great god, *≠Gaoǀna*, a servant who carries out orders and does his master's work. He should always obey *≠Gaoǀna*, but he preserves considerable independence, nevertheless, and instigates his own affairs.

One of his works is to go about to see what is going on. ' He tells the old man in the east whatever he sees and hears. " These people are staying well, those are not so well ",' Gao Medicine said, and continued, ' He may say to the old man, " Let us help these people get some food." Or he may tell him that lightning is killing some people and ask, " What shall I do? " '

Gao Scarf told us, in effect, that one time *ǁGauwa* went to *≠Gaoǀna* and asked him for medicine. *≠Gaoǀna* was annoyed. He said, ' The medicine must stay with me. I am bigger than you.' *ǁGauwa* went away and did not ask any more until some time had passed. Then he went and asked again. *≠Gaoǀna* said, ' You bad, stupid fellow! You think you are clever but you are not. I am bigger than you. I have everything. You must come and ask me every time, but this time take the medicine and go and work with your Bushmen.' That is how *ǁGauwa*, as well as *≠Gaoǀna*, gives medicine to the medicine men.

ǁGauwa is a ' small man ', he has small sense, and he makes many mistakes. If someone is sick, when the medicine men at the curing dances see him lurking, they rush at him, give him a blow, and shout that he has brought the wrong medicine. ' Idiot! You have done wrong. You make me ashamed. Go away.' And *ǁGauwa* then runs away. Sometimes after his chastisement he comes back with the proper medicine to cure and the sick person recovers.

The /Kung associate *ǁGauwa* with whirlwinds as the other Bushman and Hottentot groups did. The /Kung call a whirlwind *ǁgauwa ≠a*, which means *ǁGauwa* smell. *≠A* is not an ordinary odour, which one can actually smell, and a whirlwind is not an ordinary wind, which is *mas*. The /Kung believe that a whirlwind is ' a death thing ', ' a fight '. *ǁGauwa* walks in the whirlwind and his smell is in it, and death is in it. If the wind passes over a person, the *≠a* goes into him, and he will get sick and die. The spirits of the dead, the *ǁgauwasi*, also come in the whirlwinds. One cannot see or hear *ǁGauwa* or the *ǁgauwasi* in the whirlwinds. There are no precautions one can take to protect oneself against them except to try to get away. Little ' dust devils ' played around us very frequently in the Kalahari, and often awesome black funnels of ashes formed in the veld fires and reached from the earth to the heavens. Sometimes white clouds condensed on their tops and we believe that we saw 'pillars of cloud by day' like those the children of Israel saw.

[1] Ibid., pp. 188-9. [2] Ibid., p. 389.

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775 and they have a respectful term, */airisi*, to use if they wish to show deference and be ingratiating. Actually the /Kung seemed to speak of the *//gauwasi* quite often and much less reluctantly than they spoke of the gods. I did not happen to hear them use */airisi* except when they were telling me the term.

775 772 The *//gauwasi* move about in the sky or on earth. All over the sky fine cords are stretched, like the strands of a spider's web, invisible to us but strong. The *//gauwasi* move on these cords and can go anywhere. They descend to earth on one which hangs down from the sky, the one by which the medicine men climb up when they go to see *//Gauwa* in the western sky.

775 772 ● 821 The idea that the stars are the eyes of the dead, which some Bushmen believe, is not held by the Nyae Nyae /Kung. Some informants had heard that other people believed this. Lazy /Qui said he did not know; certainly enough people had died to account for there being so many stars. Others said stars are just stars there in the sky. Although they have names for several of them and stories about some, they do not know what substances stars are made of or what their nature is.

775 [761 825] The /Kung associate falling stars with death. They do not believe that they are spirits of the dead but that they fall to earth and become insects which are colloquially called 'ant lions' (*Myrmeleonidae*, in the order of Neuropters). These insects are common in the region. In the larval state they live in holes in the ground where one can see them spurting out grains of earth or sand. They devour ants. The /Kung believe that the bite of a fallen star may cause you to die the next day but that, if the star likes you and wishes to spare you, its bite will do you no harm. The old people have said so. *≠Gaoln* has no particular association with ant lions other than being the creator and controller of all things.

The spirits of dead persons are transmuted into *//gauwasi* by *≠Gaoln* in the east. When a person dies, *//gauwasi* come soon to take his spirit. The children of the gods are sometimes the ones who come, we were told, but any of the *//gauwasi* may do so, either ancestors of the dead person or non-related spirits.

[774] The *//gauwasi* pull the spirit out through the head of the corpse. The head is, likewise, the egress of the spirits of the medicine men. When the medicine men are in trance, [787] which the /Kung call half-death, their spirits go out temporarily from their bodies through their heads to encounter and combat *//Gauwa* and the *//gauwasi*, who lurk in the shadows around the dance fire, and it is through the heads that the spirits return.

[775] The spirit which the *//gauwasi* take from the corpse is distinct from life. The /Kung believe that life, *≠toa*, is inside the body of a person or animal, that it is put there and held there by the creator. It exists in all the vital organs in the abdomen, in blood, in the heart, lungs, throat, and mouth, and is everywhere in the head. It does not exist in the arms and legs, the /Kung believe, because they know that human beings and animals can be wounded in a limb or even lose one and not die, whereas a wound in the vital parts is likely to kill. Life dies in the body and stays there—dead, as the [774] body itself is there but dead. It is the spirit which does not die. The only word I know for spirit is *//gauwa*. The spirit is like air. It cannot be seen and cannot be kept by mortals. The *//gauwasi* take it and they take the heart and blood of the person as well. These the *//gauwasi* carry first into the western sky, to the place where *//Gauwa* lives, but they do not leave them with him. They carry them further, around by the south to the east, to the place where *≠Gaoln*, the great creator, lives.

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775 to our ears. One story was that at a place between Gam and Gautscha, where a person died, something goes '*wuu wuu wuu*', making a sound like wind in an empty ostrich eggshell or a bee buzzing in a bottle. The thing once chased ≠Nisa and her daughter. [761] They were terribly frightened, and people warned each other not to go near that place again 'because a person could get such a fright he could die of it'. One cannot see the thing. One can only hear it. On being questioned, people said they thought the thing was a *//gauwa*.

[787] *//Gauwasi* are mischievous as well as conveyors of grave evils and they trick and fool people on their own initiative, often appearing to people in dreams to do so. One might dream, for instance, that the *//gauwasi* told him he would shoot a fat buck if he hunted in a certain direction. If he then hunted there and failed to kill anything, he would know that they had tricked him. ≠Toma felt, when he was sick, that he was lying on thorns and that the *//gauwasi* were pressing down on him.

The function of the *//gauwasi* is, first and foremost, to be the servants (*≠gasi*) of the gods and to carry out their orders. They obey *≠Gaoⁿa* primarily, but are servants of *//Gauwa* as well. They are the messengers, whether good or bad fortune is being sent to the people.

775 761 753 When the gods order them to kill a person, the *//gauwasi* have innumerable ways of doing so. They can allow a buffalo to gore the person, a lion to maul him, or a snake to bite him. They were responsible for a man's falling to his death from a baobab tree—an appalling death to the /Kung, who are as careful and sure as cats. Lightning [821] —'rain fire'—is 'a death thing' and is used by the *//gauwasi* to kill people when the gods so command. *//Gauwasi* have the traditional miniature magic bows and arrows, with which they shoot people. One feels the pain of the little arrow piercing, when one is shot, but one cannot see the arrow; eventually one dies of it. Sickness, however, is the greatest tool of the death-bringers and they kill mostly by it. They can bring their sicknesses, death, and other misfortune to men at any time, but they are sure to come to the ceremonial curing dances and are always there in the shadows watching for their chance to inflict the ill on the person or persons whom they are sent to destroy.

Although the *//gauwasi* are associated in the people's minds primarily with sickness and death and the people fear them with a pervading fear, the /Kung do not appear to suffer in an agony of terror. I think that their fear is mitigated by the belief that the *//gauwasi* are minor characters and can be driven away and that in their own natures they are not wholly evil. Like the mortals they once were, they are capable of being [782] good, bad, or indifferent to man. People can plead with them for their favour and sometimes they feel pity and are helpful.

Man's Relations with the Gods

772 776 *≠Gaoⁿa* said, when he praised himself, 'I take my own way and no one can command me. I am a stranger, unknowable. I am *chi doh*.' The /Kung these days evidently imagine him to be as much the self unbridled as the old protagonist of the tales. However, unlike the old *≠Gaoⁿa*, he is not indifferent to mankind, and, even though he lives in the sky, he is not remote. On the contrary, he is deeply involved with humanity, constantly aware of what people do, constantly reacting with pleasure or displeasure, and he favours, punishes, or ill-treats man accordingly.

312 at the waterholes consists primarily of roots and bulbs of the
221
824 genera: Eulophia, Vigna, Walleria, and Coccinia, and the edible sap of Acacia spp. and Terminalia sericea. It is this time of year that the heart of the dwarf vegetable ivory palm is eaten,
[164] (Hyphaene). Those who eat its fibrous pulp experience stomach cramps and diarrhea, but, as the Bushmen say, it make one's "mouth work" and gives one a sensation of a full stomach.
221 Hunting is arduous business in the heat and men who go out in
224 the early morning find it necessary to spend the mid-day hours resting in the shade. The principal animal killed is the springhare.

132 The first rains are convectional thundershowers. Their distribution is spotty. A storm may briefly inundate one area and miss entirely another area only a mile away.

312 The Bushmen observe the storm clouds travelling across
222 the horizon and try to judge where the showers have drenched
[821] the ground. They then set out in family groups in the direction of the rains. If they find that water has collected in the hollows of mongongo trees, they will stay in the nut groves for several days and eat nuts until the water is exhausted. They then fill their karosses with nuts and return to the permanent water. If, on reaching the nut groves, they find that no water has collected they will be forced to fill their karosses with nuts and return to camp the same day. In certain areas

132
433 physical condition of the Bushmen was visibly poorer in November 1964 by comparison with November 1963.

2. Main rains

132 The Bushmen say that a series of intense downpours
361
[821] (measuring 2-3 inches) heralds the beginning of the main rains and ushers in their season of abundance. Such a fall occurred in 1963 at the end of November. The immediate effect of these downpours is to produce standing water in the small molapos that lie in the interstices of the dunes. When these seasonal waters become established, virtually the entire Bushman population moves out to live at them. Thus from December through March the permanent waterholes are largely deserted.

312 With the coming of the main rains, the summer foods
433
222 begin to ripen. These foods appear around the summer water sources and they appear also around the permanent waterholes. It is significant, that, although foods become available at the permanent waterholes, the Bushmen tend to avoid these foods. They prefer to eat the foods that are around the summer waters. This illustrates one way that the Bushmen take maximum advantage of the more distant foods. They defer exploitation of the foods around the permanent waterhole until the winter when the alternative water sources have dried out.

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lighting a new fire at the next encampment, although this is a practice which, as we have just seen, Fourie explicitly denies for the Heikum.

There is no indication at all in the available literature that similar usages relating to fire are found among the rest of the Bushmen, nor is there any further evidence of their occurrence among the tribes mentioned above. On the other hand the sacred fire also plays a very conspicuous part in the social and ritual life of the OvaHerero, OvaMbo, and Bergdama, all of them close neighbours of the Bushmen tribes among whom it is found, and with the last two of whom the Heikum at least have intermixed considerably. It is probable therefore that the special observances relating to fire among the Heikum and the Kung may represent borrowed elements of culture; but much fuller information is needed about them before this can be definitely asserted. Whatever their origin, however, these usages now obviously play an important part in the social life of the people. In particular, the fact that at the present time the chief of the band has certain exclusive functions in connection with fire is of outstanding significance in the whole sphere of public life, and one which cannot be dismissed merely because it may be due to the effects of contact with other peoples. To this point we shall have to return when discussing the political institutions of the Bushmen.

Special Usages relating to Food

There is not much information available about food taboos, but it appears that, in some of the tribes at least, certain foods are forbidden to persons at different stages of life. In the texts obtained by Dr. Bleek and Miss Lloyd from the Cape Bushmen there are preserved the details of some of the food taboos prevalent among this people. Thus little children were not allowed to eat the heart of the jackal (on account of this animal's great timidity), certain portions of the ostrich, or the tip of the springbok's tail; a menstruating girl might not eat game killed by the young men, lest she bring them ill luck—she had to eat only game taken by her father; a certain kind of tortoise was forbidden to young unmarried men and women, for fear of arousing the wrath of the rain; women were not allowed to eat the flesh of the lynx; the tail of the porcupine was forbidden to certain (unspecified) persons; while all refrained from eating a certain small portion of the flesh of the hare.[1] The published information relating

[1] L. C. Lloyd, *Further Bushman Material Collected*, 23; Bleek and Lloyd, *Bushman Folklore*, cf. references in Index, s.v. "Food—not to be eaten."

2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date)1930
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to these taboos is unfortunately so fragmentary that little can be gathered of the ideas underlying them. Several of them are undoubtedly connected with wider ritual observances, e.g. the taboo imposed on menstruating girls, and again that associated with a certain belief about the rain; but of the others no full explanation is available, although the taboo on the portion of the hare may possibly be linked up with the Bushman myth of the origin of death, in which the hare plays the part of the fateful messenger who distorts the promise of immortality sent to mankind by the moon.

Among the Naron, again, "It does not seem," says Miss Bleek,[1] "as if many taboos in the food line still existed. Paauw meat and ostrich eggs are chiefly given to old men as the greatest delicacies. Some say young children, or girls till they have had their first baby, are not to eat steenbok, lest they remain small, but others tell me that all meat is eaten by everyone. Honey touched by a baboon must not be eaten, or you will die." Among the Auen, young girls and boys apparently may not eat game at all, otherwise they will remain thin; while water and food collected by a menstruating woman may be partaken of only by herself and old people—it "makes others weak".[2]

About the Heikum we have far more information on this point, thanks to the excellent description given by Fourie of certain of their hunting observances.[3] The details he gives throw such a wealth of new light upon this aspect of Bushman life that they may be quoted in full. "After an animal has been shot it is followed by the hunter until it expires or until nightfall when he returns to the *//gaus* (camp). The following morning the whole community takes part in the search for the carcass, as the previous day's tracks had in all probability been effaced during the night by other animals. The searchers spread out on a wide front and keep a very sharp lookout for the presence of vultures. After the carcass has been found it is skinned by the men. The belly is then opened and the entrails removed and cleaned. Bags are made from the stomach and into these the blood is collected. The animal is next cut up and, after this has been done, the liver is roasted and eaten by the men. The skin, if suitable for the purpose, is cut into sandals, bowstrings, etc., on the spot. The meat is then removed to the *//gaus* by the men who may occasionally be assisted by the women. On arrival at the *//gaus* all the meat is laid

[1] *The Naron*, 7.
[2] Kaufmann, "Die Auin," 140, 157.
[3] "The Bushmen of S.W. Africa," 100–2; cf. *idem*, "Customs of the Hei-//om Bushmen," 54–6.

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heads, beset the entire distance with all kinds of imaginary obstacles and difficulties; and even after all their labour on arriving at the desired destination they will have nothing but flies to live upon." This belief that after a time the dead arise and go to a land where there is an abundance of good food is likewise recorded by Campbell and by Miss Currle, neither of whom, however, is a specially trustworthy authority. The Bushman informants of Dr. Bleek also spoke of "the place to which the Bushmen go after death", but unfortunately the details given by them have not yet been published. We are unable, therefore, to tell if their ideas of a future life were in any way similar to those reported by Stow and the other writers.[1]

On the other hand, these Bushman informants also had a variety of interesting beliefs linking up death with the phenomena of Nature. The stars, they said, know the time when a Bushman dies, and the fall of one announces, to those who are not aware of it, that something bad has happened. When, after this, a "hammerkop" (*Scopus umbretta*, the "lightning bird" of other South African tribes) flies, calling out, over the camp, the people know that someone belonging to them has died. When rain is accompanied by lightning, girls who are out in the open become killed by the lightning and are converted into stars, while those who are taken away by the rain become beautiful water-flowers, which will not allow themselves to be plucked and disappear when approached. Such flowers must be let alone. Hence the rule that young unmarried women and girls must hide themselves from the rain. The Moon, again, is hollow (in its first quarter) because it is carrying people who are dead. The human heart is believed to fall down after death in the form of a shooting star; the hair of a dead person is changed into clouds, while his gall appears again as a green colour in the sky, and so forth. Dead people may also come in their own forms as apparitions to their relatives and friends, even in waking life. There seems, however, to be no evil portent in this; nor, indeed, does there seem to be any noticeable fear of dead persons on the whole, although we are told that the names of those who are dead must not be uttered by children at night.[2]

The Namib Bushmen, on the other hand, seem to fear dead people greatly, and, as we have seen, the thickened *dawes* sap placed in the

[1] Stow, op. cit., 129; Campbell, *Second Journey in S. Africa*, i, 29; Currle, "Bushmen of Namaqualand," 117; Bleek, *Bushman Texts*, 19.
[2] Lloyd, *Bushman Material Collected*, 21, 25; Bleek and Lloyd, op. cit., 365–71, 389–401.

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114 184 769 789 [775] asked to make use of the special powers they had possessed in life and apparently still retained, just as they would be approached when alive. The main conclusion to be drawn, in fact, is that these Bushmen do not regard dead people as wholly severed from the world of the living. There is certainly nothing here to warrant the assumption of any regular organized worship of the dead.

Worship of Heavenly Bodies

782 821 [794] Religious cult among the Cape Bushmen centres largely in the worship of the Heavenly Bodies, and especially of the Moon. Prayers directed by them to the Moon have been recorded in the texts collected by Bleek and Lloyd, but unfortunately the details given are far too [114] scanty to throw much light upon the nature of the worship. One account, indeed, indicates that when the New Moon first appears every man prays to it, and Orpen also mentions having seen Bushmen throw sand in the air and shout out on seeing the crescent moon when it first appeared, but there is nothing else to suggest any special form of rite. The prayers themselves are chiefly prayers for food, and one of them, just lately published by Miss Bleek,[1] may be quoted as illustrating the form of invocation. It is spoken with raised right hand :—

539 782 821

Ho, my hand is this,
I shoot a springbok with my hand
By an arrow.

I lie down,
I will early kill a springbok
To-morrow.

Ho, Moon lying there,
Let me kill a springbok
To-morrow,
Let me eat a springbok;
With this arrow
Let me shoot a springbok
With this arrow;
Let me eat a springbok,
Let me eat filling my body
In the night which is here,
Let me fill my body.

Ho Moon lying there,
I dig out ants' food
To-morrow,
Let me eat it.

Ho Moon lying there,
I kill an ostrich to-morrow
With this arrow.

[1] "Bushman Folklore," *Africa*, ii (1929), 306.

2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date) 1930
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 821 [539] [782]

Ho Moon lying there,
Thou must look at this arrow,
That I may shoot a springbok with it to-morrow.

In the mythology of these people the Moon is represented now as the shoe of the Mantis, which he threw into the sky to give him light, now as a man gradually sliced down to almost complete extinction by the sun; and it is also connected, as we have seen, with the origin of death. But that it is more than merely a mythological character to them is shown not only by the prayers, but also by various special observances relating to it. The Moon is not to be laughed at, lest it become angry and go into the sky (i.e. become eclipsed). A Bushman child for the same reason is warned by his father not to look at the Moon as it rises behind the mountain, for fear of arousing its anger and causing it to become obscured. Above all the Moon may not be looked at when game has been shot, lest the wounded animal be lost.[1] [773]

Prayers are also found addressed to the Sun and, more frequently, to the Stars. Abundance of food is attributed to them, and the prayers, like those addressed to the Moon, ask for success in hunting and collecting, and say, in effect, "send food, that we may live and not die." Certain stars are asked for certain foods, probably those that come into season about the time the star first appears in the evening sky. Canopus, for instance, known as the "Bushman rice (ants' larvæ) Star", is addressed as follows[2]:— 782 821

[539]

O Star coming there,
Let me see a springbok,
O Star coming there,
Let me dig out ants' food
With this stick;
O Star-body coming there,
Let me dig out ants' food
With this stick;
O Star coming there,
Let me see a springbok to-morrow;
O Star coming there,
I give thee my heart;
Do thou give me thy heart;
O Star coming there,
I may see a proteles to-morrow,
Let the dog kill it,
Let me eat it,
Let me eat filling my body,
That I may lie and sleep at night.

[1] Bleek, *Bushman Texts*, 7, 9–10, 15; Lloyd, *Bushman Material Collected*, 7; Bleek and Lloyd, *Bushman Folklore*, Index s. v. "Moon"; Orpen, "Mythology of the Malut Bushman", 141; D. F. Bleek, op. cit., 304–6.
[2] D. F. Bleek, op. cit., 307.

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821 789 372 The first appearance of this star in the evening sky is also the occasion for the performance of a certain ceremony. In the words of Dr. Bleek's informant, "The Bushmen perceive Canopus, they say to a child: 'Give me yonder piece of wood, that I may put (the end of) it (in the fire), that I may point (it) burning (towards) grandmother; for, grandmother carries Bushman rice; grandmother shall make a little warmth for us; for she coldly comes out; the sun shall warm grandmother's eye for us." About the same time as Canopus, Sirius appears, and a similar ceremony takes place; the man who first saw the star is asked to "burn (a stick) for us (towards) Sirius; that the sun may shining come out for us; that Sirius may not coldly come out". He holds the end of the stick in the fire until it has caught alight, and then points it towards the star, moving it up and down quickly. "He sings; he sings (about) Canopus, he sings (about) Sirius; he points to them with fire, that they may twinkle like each other. He throws fire at them. He covers himself up entirely (including his head) in (his) kaross and lies down. He arises, he sits down; while he does not again lie down; because he feels that he has worked, putting Sirius into the sun's warmth; so that Sirius may warmly come out."[1] Both these stars appear in winter, hence the cold is connected with them. The ceremony just described is therefore almost certainly a warming incantation. It is said also that it will make the stars rise higher, for the higher they stand above the eastern horizon at sunrise, and the more brightly they twinkle, the more nearly winter draws to an end.

773 821 In the mythology the stars are held to have once been animals or people of the Early Race, in some cases people who had been transformed upon breaking some taboo. Many of the stars and constellations, as Dr. Bleek points out, bear names which they apparently owe only to the fact that they are seen at certain times when the animals or other objects whose names they bear come into season or are most abundant. This would suggest the close connection between them and the food supply. "Of course," he adds, "when such names as steinbok, hartebeest, eland, anteater, lion, tortoise, etc., had once become attached to certain stars or constellations, fancy might step in and try to discover the shapes of those animals (or other objects) in the configuration of the stars; whilst, at the same time, mythological personification would begin its work,

[1] *Bushman Folklore*, 338–41.

2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date) 1930
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and make the heavens the theatre of numberless poetically-conceived histories"—in which, as the texts obtained by him show, Bushman mythology is extremely rich.[1]

The selections so far published from these texts are too few to enable us to determine anything more about the nature of the worship directed to these heavenly bodies, and especially about the ceremonies associated with them; but that such worship did actually exist is evident from the facts recorded above.

There is no mention of similar prayers among the Namib Bushmen, but then no information at all is available about their ideas relating to the heavenly bodies. Among the tribes further north we again meet with moon worship. Both Naron and Auen still worship the Moon. They regard it as an old man, the Sun as a young girl, who is his wife. First the Moon pursues the Sun across the sky, later the Sun follows the Moon. They go down to their houses below the horizon in the west, then fly back at night across the earth to their houses in the east. They can be heard passing, but are not seen. The New Moon, when it appears, is invoked by the magicians, two of whom, man and woman, sit on the ground together, holding their hands out palms upward towards it, and say: "Give us rain that we may live." This worship of the Moon has penetrated into modern ideas also, for most of the people think that since the Moon is in the sky and the God (*!khuba*) the white men and Nama speak of is also in the sky, therefore God is the Moon. Their ancestors used also to pray to certain stars, particularly the morning star and the Southern Cross; but these prayers, says Miss Bleek, are memories of long ago, whereas the moon worship is continued to-day by young as well as old.[2]

A prayer to the New Moon for food, given in the eighties of last century by a Kung youth from near Lake Ngami, is also recorded in the texts collected by Bleek and Lloyd[3]; but according to Lebzelter there is nowadays no trace at all among the Kung of either sun or moon worship. The sun is regarded as a woman, the moon as a man, who originally lived upon earth and were carried about on the shoulders of people; but the latter became tired of their burdens

[1] Bleek, "Resemblances in Bushman and Australian Mythology," *Cape Monthly Mag.*, Feb., 1874, 101–2; *idem*, *Bushman Texts*, 10–12, 15; Lloyd, *Bushman Material Collected*, 8, 22; Bleek and Lloyd, *Bushman Folklore*, 72–99 *et passim*; D. F. Bleek, "Bushman Folklore," 304, 307.
[2] *Naron*, 26–7.
[3] *Bushman Folklore*, 414–15.

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821 [773] and left them lying alone, whereupon they ascended to the sky. This story, adds Lebzelter, is not believed in at all by the people, who told it to him with great laughter.[1]

[782] Other prayers to the New Moon are found, however, among the !O Kung in Angola. [535] Miss Bleek describes a dance seen by her, in which the women and girls stood in a group on one side singing and clapping their hands, while the men, singing also but not clapping, were in an irregular group on the other side, wriggling their whole bodies but otherwise hardly moving. The song accompanying this dance was a repetition of the words :—

[539]

//awa-se //kabama //gu a i-i,	New Moon, come out, give water to us,
//awa-se tatana //gu a i-i,	New Moon, thunder down water for us,
//awa-se tale u //gu a i-i,	New Moon, shake down water for us.

Here also, as among the Naron and Auen, the Moon is therefore looked upon as the raingiver, and is prayed to as such—and rain, it must be remembered, makes the plants grow which feed the buck, hence it provides both vegetable and animal food. The New Moon is said to be either a child or a man, while the Full Moon is a woman. This distinction Miss Bleek interprets in the light of the difference in form presented by these two aspects of the Moon. In Naron and [193] [196] Nama the masculine and feminine endings are given to the same roots to denote respectively strong, tall, slender things and weak, short, round things. So here the New Moon may be called a man, because of its slenderness, the Full Moon a woman because of its round shape. The Moon is also held to be the elder sister, the sun the younger; but apparently there are no special practices or beliefs regarding the latter, although one of Miss Bleek's informants said: "We sing to the Sun and the Stars as well as the Moon." [782] No prayers to the former are recorded, however.[2]

The only other Bushmen of whose ideas relating to the heavenly bodies we have information are the Hiechware. [184] Dornan states that he was unable to discover among them any special ceremonies connected with the sun and the moon, but that they certainly do reverence these bodies, although seeming to dread them more than anything else. They think they must keep on good terms with the sun and the moon if they are to be successful in hunting or anything [782] else they undertake. He could not, however, discover any prayers

[1] Religiösen Vorstellungen der *//Khun*-Buschmänner," 401; *idem*, "Bei den !Kuh Buschleuten" 13.

[2] "Buschmänner von Angola," 53; *idem*, "Bushmen of Central Angola," 119–20, 122, 124.

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or other worship directed to these bodies.[1] How far the absence of moon worship must be attributed to the fact that these Bushmen have long been exposed to Bantu influence is difficult to say. In view of the comparative evidence afforded by the other Bushman tribes, however, as well as the fact that the Hiechware have certainly been considerably influenced by the BeChwana, this seems the most reasonable suggestion; although, as already noted, Dornan cannot be regarded as a fully reliable authority.

The evidence on the whole shows quite definitely that worship of the heavenly bodies, and especially of the Moon, exists among the Bushmen. In all the instances noted, the New Moon is prayed to; in the case of the Cape Bushmen for food, although the details of the ceremony are not available, while among the Naron, Auen, and !O Kung there is a special ceremony at which it is invoked for rain. There is nothing to suggest that the Moon is conceived of as a supreme deity, or that it forms the object of an elaborate cult. At the same time the prayers and ceremonies noted clearly constitute an act of worship. They must therefore be regarded as part of the Bushman religion. The prayers and usages relating to the sun and the stars among the Cape Bushmen suggest a wider sidereal worship, which the scanty details from the Northern tribes would seem to bear out; but the worship of the Moon seems to be by far the most prominent.

Supernatural Beings

In other aspects of religion and mythology there appears to be a good deal of variation in details among the different Bushmen tribes. The most prominent figure in the mythology of the Cape Bushmen is the Mantis, round whom a whole cycle of myths has been formed. Besides his own proper name, */kaggen*, he possesses several others, as does also his wife, whose most usual name, however, is */huntu!katt!katten*, the Dassie or Rock Rabbit (*Hyrax capensis*). They have three children, a daughter, of whom there is no further mention; a son, */gaunu-ts'axau* (*/gaunu* is the name of a certain star, and *ts'axau* means "eye"), who in one of the tales is killed by baboons, and restored to life again by the Mantis; and another son, */kaggen-⊙pwa*, the young Mantis, who also figures in one of the tales, where his likeness to his father is commented upon. Besides his own children the Mantis has an adopted daughter, */xo*, the Porcupine.

[1] *Pygmies and Bushmen*, 163.

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773 776 Her real father is a monster named *//khwai-hemm*, the All-devourer, but she does not dare to live with him, for fear of being eaten herself. She is married to */kwammanga*, a mythical person not identified [821] with any animal, but seen in the rainbow. They have two children, */kwammanga-⊙pwa*, young */kwammanga*, who is brave and quiet like his father, and */ai*, the Ichneumon, who plays an important part in the mythology, particularly in advising and assisting his grandfather the Mantis, and in chiding him for his misdeeds. All these, the Bushmen say, were once men and women, people of the Early Race which preceded the Bushmen, but now they are animals.

In their myths the Mantis is gifted with supernatural powers, yet often has a most stupid and perverse character; he is sometimes mischievous, sometimes kind, and is always getting into scrapes and unnecessary fights by his foolishness. He has the power of speech, which all his possessions share with him; he dreams, and his dreams come true; he foretells the ultimate future, when he and his comrades will all be animals; he can transform himself into various other animal forms, is sometimes killed, but always comes to life again. He also has creative powers. One myth relates that the Bushmen were formerly springboks, and were changed by him into human beings; another that he gave places their names; while he gives the bucks their colours and names and has them under his special protection. He can also bring people back to life again. But he is never prayed to, although, as we have seen, there are prayers to the Moon, who is also his creation. Nor is there any evidence of observances specially connected with him, apart from the mention [751] of a "curious charm" made from the foot of the hartebeest and used by women for their children as a protection against him.[1]

773 825 821 The Rain or Water, */khwa*, is also acknowledged by these Bushmen as a supernatural personage, and various beliefs and usages are directed towards it. It is often represented as an animal; in the form of a bull it carries off a young maiden, in the form of an eland it was shot by a man of the early race with disastrous effects. It is thought 821 of most commonly, however, as an animal living in a waterhole, 825 and it is believed that wherever this animal goes, rain will fall. One [789] of the principal methods of rain-making, therefore, is for the rain-magicians to drag this animal over as large a tract of country as they can, in order that the rain should extend as far as possible.

[1] Bleek, *Bushman Texts*, 6–9; Lloyd, *Bushman Material Collected*, 5–7; Bleek and Lloyd, *Bushman Folklore*, 1–37; D. F. Bleek, *The Mantis and his Friends*; *idem*, *Bushman Folklore*, 305.

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can, in order that the rain should extend as far as possible. Among the many rock-paintings left by the Bushmen in the caves and rock-shelters of their country there are pictures "of wonderful animals, such as certainly never existed; these the Bushmen of fifty years ago explained as Rain bulls, Rain animals. With them are often seen frogs, fish, tortoise, and snake, the animals protected by the Rain".[1] Certain snakes found near a waterhole are believed to be kept in store by the Rain, and for fear of arousing its wrath may not be eaten by young unmarried men and women; nor may frogs be killed, lest drought ensue. When the Rain is angry with anyone, people may be carried off in a whirlwind, and various transformations effected. Young women are particularly exposed to danger from the Rain, and to avoid this they must observe various rules of conduct. They must propitiate the waterhole by means of *buchu* and *tto* (aromatic shrubs); they must hide themselves from the Rain; they must not snap their fingers at people, nor may they be spoken to against their wish, lest the anger of the Rain be thereby aroused. There are many legends telling how disobedient girls were punished, together with those around them, by the angry Rain, or were taken up by his agency in a whirlwind and transformed into frogs, snakes, porcupines, stars, water-flowers, etc. Such transformations are also illustrated in the rock-paintings.

The Rain thus appears as something to be respected or feared, since it has power to change people into animals and other objects, as well as to destroy with storms and terrible lightning. At the same time it also brings water and makes food grow. In connection with this latter aspect Miss Bleek says: "That Bushmen realized the life-giving powers of water is clear, as all tales of rebirth are connected therewith. The Mantis restores his son and his sister, the Blue crane, to life after they have been killed by throwing a part of their body into the water. In course of time this part grows up into the person to which it had belonged. In the same way he makes an eland of a shoe (perhaps a piece of eland's skin). An ostrich is killed; one of its feathers blows into the water and becomes a new ostrich."

"Yet in spite of the Bushman's dependence on water and realization of its power," she goes on to say, "he does not represent it as a man or god. One instance is known to me of the Rain being addressed, when it is wrathful and lightens; but the first part of the speech is to the dead men who ride it:—

[1] D. F. Bleek, *Bushman Folklore*, 30.

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O gallopers,
O gallopers,
Do ye not know me?
Ye do not seem to know my hut.

Then they speak to the Rain itself:—

Thou shouldst put thy tail between thy legs,
For the women are looking shocked at thee;
Thou shouldst put thy tail between thy legs for the children.

The Rain seems here to be thought of as a magic animal ridden by spirits."

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Certain magicians have power over the Rain, and can cause it to come or stay away, as they please. These powers remain with them even after death, and just as in life they are asked for rain, so when they are dead, they may also be entreated to send it. Other magicians have a similar power over the wind, */khwe*, and are protected by it. The howling of the wind is believed to forebode evil; it tells the beasts of prey where to find people, and when it blows strongly they can approach the huts unheard. In the mythology the wind [773] is represented as having formerly been a man, which now wears the form of a bird.[1]

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Among the Bushmen of Basutoland and the Orange Free State we meet again with tales about the Mantis, differing but slightly from those of the Cape. He seems, however, to have been here the object of a definite cult as well. According to Arbousset, it was believed that *'Kaang* (i.e. */kaggen*) or, as he was also termed, *'Kue-'akeng-'teng*, "the man (master) of all things," causes life and death and gives [761] [821] or refuses rain. All the animals have special marks which he has put [825] upon them; deficiency of game is attributed to him, and he is invoked for success in the chase. He is also worshipped in times of famine

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and before going to war, when the *mo'koma* or "dance of blood" is performed all through the night. This dance Orpen's informant, [773] Qing, described as follows: "*Cagn* (i.e. */kaggen*)[2] gave us the song of this dance, and told us to dance it, and people would die from it, and he would give charms to raise them again. It is a circular dance of men and women, following each other, and it is danced all night. [786] Some fall down, some become as if mad and sick, blood runs from the noses of others whose charms are weak, and they eat charm medicine, in which is burnt snake powder.

[1] Bleek, *Bushman Texts*, 17; Lloyd, *Bushman Material Collected*, 9, 20–1; Bleek and Lloyd, *Bushman Folklore*, 195–9, 393–7 *et passim*; D. F. Bleek, *Bushman Folklore*, 307–9.

[2] In some orthographies, especially that used for the Zulu-Xosa languages, the symbol c represents the dental click, written / in the standard orthography for Bushman and Hottentot languages. *Cagn* is therefore merely another way of writing */kaggen*; both represent the same sounds. [104]

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776 " the Lord " or " the great captain ", whom he identifies with Vedder's *Huwu* or *Hu'e*. This " supreme being " is regarded as anthropomorphic, he looks like a Bushman and he also speaks Kung. He lives in the sky in a house with two storeys, the lower of which is occupied by himself, his wife, whose name is unknown, and many children, while the upper is occupied, as already mentioned, by the souls of the dead (*xu*). In appearance this house is similar to the ordinary Bushman hut, although not quite the same, and its exterior is " hairy like a caterpillar ". Honey, locusts, fat flies, and butterflies [825] are found here in superabundance, and the " great captain " feeds [775] upon these; the souls of the dead, however, merely sit around and eat nothing. *Xu* summons the magicians to their profession, and [756] gives them supernatural powers; he is the lord over rain and lightning, as well as over the spirits, *//gauab*, and through the chief of the latter he sends good fortune in hunting or in the collection of veldkos. If anybody thinks or speaks evil of him, he punishes the evildoer with lightning; otherwise he takes no interest in the doings of his [782] " Bushman children ", except when somebody swears falsely by him, for the Kung have a regular oath in which they invoke him. He is prayed to by them in fixed form for rain, in case of severe illness, before going out hunting or before undertaking a dangerous journey.[1]

The Western Kung of Ukuanyama (Oschimpoloveld) speak of [184] *Erob*, translated by Lebzelter as " God ", who, like *Xu*, lives in a house in the sky to which the souls of the dead are brought. He is [782] often prayed to, especially for rain and in hunting, as well as in case [224] of illness, " because he has made all things and can do everything and knows everything ", and he is given the first offerings of the chase. The rain comes at his command as a mist out of the earth, [821] and then falls down, thereupon making thunder and lightning.[2]

821 184 776 [782] *Erob* also figures as the " supreme being " among the Heikum of the Etosha Pan, although in prayers for rain and in case of illness he is addressed as *Xu*. The group in North-Eastern Ondonga speak of the " supreme being " as *Xamaba*, the groups at Ukuambi know him as *Erob* or *Xuwa*, and the group at Uukualuthi as *Erob*; and among them all, as among the Eastern Kung, he lives in the sky in a house to which the souls of the dead are brought. Almost

[1] " Religiösen Vorstellungen der //Kau-Buschmänner," 407-9; *idem*, " Bei den !Kuh-Buschleuten," 15.
[2] " Religiösen Vorstellungen," 412.

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everywhere he is regarded as the creator of all things, including mankind, and he sends the rain. He is prayed to for rain, in sickness, before and after hunting, and before travel, and by the group at Uukualuthi he is also given the first-offerings of the chase, as among the Kung of the Oschimpoloveld. Almost everywhere he has neither wife nor children; it is only among the Eastern Kung that mention is made of these. He is regarded everywhere as benevolent and good, but appears to have no connection with the moral life of the people.[1]

The !O Kung in Angola did not mention *Erob* or *Xuwa*, but spoke again of *Huwe*. Here, as we have seen, *Huwe* occasionally appears at the boys' puberty ceremonies and dances with the initiates, sometimes as a youth, sometimes in double guise as man and woman. In the prayer to the New Moon his name may also be substituted for *//nwa-se*, but apart from this substitution there is no evidence of worship directed towards him. He is further said to appear to people in dreams.[2] Of the attributes found by Lebzelter for the "supreme being" among the Kung and the Heikum no mention at all is made by Miss Bleek.

Huwe appears again among the Bushmen of the Eastern Kalahari. They believe, according to Dornan, in a spirit which they variously call *Dtimo*, *Thora*, and *Huwe*. *Dtimo* is a corruption of the Chwana word *Modimo*, nowadays generally rendered "God", and is, says Dornan, "largely used by the tame Bushmen with the same signification." *Thora* and *Huwe* are the regular Bushman words. *Huwe* is here spoken of as the good spirit who wards off disease, gives plenty, and protects the Bushmen from danger. When any danger threatens, they will call upon him; Dornan mentions having once heard some Bushmen of the Sansokwe River sing over and over again the words *Huwe ka hume ie ie*, *Huwe* come to our aid ie ie. More often, however, they speak of *Thora*. They say he made all things, but they are not sure where he dwells, or if he is a person. According to Dornan they look upon him as the Great One, who is over all things, who sends rain and game, plenty of food and good luck in hunting. They often use *Thora* to ensure success in hunting; when, e.g. they have killed an animal they will praise him for bringing it under their arrows. This statement Dornan seems to have derived

[1] Lebzelter, op. cit., 410–12; cf. Schmidt, "Die alten Buschmann-Religion," 197, summarizing Lebzelter's data.

[2] D. F. Bleek, "Buschmänner von Angola," 14; *idem*, "Bushmen of Central Angola," 122, 123.

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from Chapman, who records that once when some Bushmen were with him and he had killed a rhinoceros they threw some dust on its tail and spat in its eyes before they touched it, muttering meanwhile "some gibberish" to *Thora*, while on another occasion when he had killed some elephants a similar performance was again enacted by his Bushman attendants.

The distinction between *Thora* and *Huwe* is not quite clear from Dornan's account. In one place he seems to imply that the two words refer to the same conception. Elsewhere, however, he remarks: "Huwe seems an inferior kind of spirit to Thora, for at times the latter is invoked to come to his aid, as if the former were not powerful enough to defend himself and his children. Some Bushmen near the Tuli River sang the following words, in an agitated and melancholy voice: 'Thora ba Huwe i-e i-e, Thora come to the help of Huwe i-e i-e,' ad lib." From their attributes, however, it seems that the two conceptions *Thora* and *Huwe* are substantially the same. In all probability the name *Huwe* has drifted in from the west, which would explain why it is sometimes substituted for *Thora*, sometimes found alongside it.[1]

In addition to this being variously named *Hishe*, *Huwe*, *Xu*, *Erob*, *Thora*, etc., all the Northern Bushmen also speak of *//gauwa* (*Gaua*, *//gaua*, *//gauab*, etc.). This word, as we have already seen, is used by the North-Western Bushmen for "a person who has died", or more precisely, as appears in certain cases, for the ghost of a dead person. It is, however, also used with a much wider application. Among the Naron and Auen at Sandfontein the wind is called *//gauwa* when it is strong and howls. One of the Naron tales recorded by Miss Bleek speaks of the wind as a man going about, and of *//gauwa* as a bird accompanying him. "*//gauwa* says: 'I make the wind and thus go.'" Some of the people seemed to believe in a supreme *//gauwa*, a being who lives in the east near *Hishe*, to whose house the ghosts repair by day. They said he was *Hishe's* younger brother, while others said *//gauwa* was *Hishe*. Miss Bleek affirms that no ideas of good or bad qualities are connected with either of these beings, nor are they prayed to. Fourie, however, speaks of *Gaua* among the partly-disorganized Auen and Naron as a "bad being" or "Satan", to whom people dying a "bad death" are said to go,

[1] Dornan, op. cit., 148–50; Chapman, *Travels in S. Africa*, i, 386, 81. The translation given by Dornan of the prayer in which *Thora* is asked to come to the aid of *Huwe* cannot be relied upon. In another place (*J.R. Anthrop. Inst.*, 1917, p. 53) he renders the same words: "God leave (us) alone is is!"

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while those dying a "good death" go to */khutse* (*/khuba*). "About the nature of these beings," he adds, "they have no idea, nor are their lives and activities influenced to any extent by them." But he records a tale in which the knowledge of magic by the Bushmen is ascribed to *Gaua*, who initiated one of them "on the other side" into the use of the small magic quiver (cf. below "Magic and Magicians"), while in his description of the boys' puberty ceremonies he speaks as if *Gaua* were the supernatural being figuring in them, whereas Miss Bleek's informants all mentioned *Hishe*.[1]

Vedder, again, says of the Kung at Tsumeb that they believe in *//gaua*, who is opposed to *Huwe*, and from whom they expect only evil. They protect themselves against him by means of amulets. The !O Kung of Angola ascribe thunder and lightning to *//gaua*. When it thunders, they say "*//gaua* thunders", and when anyone is struck by lightning, a frequent occurrence, the death is related in the words: "*//gaua* took him or her." Two aunts of Miss Bleek's informant who had been killed by lightning were said to sit in the sky as stars. All stars are called *//gaua's* fires; there do not seem to be any separate names for them. *//gaua* also leads the people at a girl's puberty dance, and the cuts made on the girl's body are said to be in his honour. The same informant, a female magician, said that the Bushmen were *//gaua's* children. He is a male being who comes in from the forest, where his dwelling is a hole in the ground, and magicians can see it from afar. But people do not pray to him. This was also stated by a male informant, who said *//gaua* was *Ndtambi* (the Mbunda word for deity, used by the missionaries for "God"); "we pray to sun, moon, and stars," he added, "but not to *//gaua*."[2]

Much new light is thrown upon the conception of *//gaua* by Lebzelter's accounts of the spirit world among the Kung and the Heikum. Among the Eastern Kung, he says, the "great captain" *Xu* is also the lord of all the spirits, *//gauab*, to whom he entrusts all dealings with mankind, except in the matter of rain, over which he himself directly presides. These spirits affect human life both helpfully and harmfully. They can be seen and spoken to by the magicians, and look like men, but many of them are lame. They are not classified systematically by the Kung, but Lebzelter claims to recognize five kinds.

[1] D. F. Bleek, *Naron*, 26, 46; Fourie, "Bushmen of S.W.A.," 104.
[2] Vedder, op. cit., 6, 7; D. F. Bleek, "Buschmänner von Angola," 14; *idem*, "Bushmen of Central Angola," 123–4.

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and he eats their hearts; he has forbidden people to eat the hare and the ostrich; he makes thunder and lightning; and the stars are his hearth-fire. Often he takes a star and throws it at a man, then the latter dies—a belief held in slightly different form by the Eastern Kung also, who regard a shooting star as foreboding the death of someone. Mention is further made of the "Saviour" or bringer of blessings ("Heilbringer") *Heiseb* or *Iseb*, to whom belongs the "benefactress" *Ises*, who gave the bow and arrow to mankind.[1]

The name */gamab* is also found among the Heikum of North-East Ondonga under the form *xamaba*. Here, however, Lebzelter speaks of *xamaba* as "the Supreme Being" who has made all things, including mankind, and who sends the rain. He is prayed to for rain, before a journey is undertaken, and in case of illness; he receives the souls of the dead in his house in the sky; he can be spoken to by the magicians, and he inflicts illness upon people whom he does not like. There is also an "evil spirit" *Heiseb*, "from whom comes the fire"; while in the bush there are said to be hobgoblins, */ga/ga hu*, but none of Lebzelter's informants had seen them, and their existence was doubted.[2]

In the Eastern Kalahari, again, *Huwe* and sometimes *Thora* are, according to Dornan, engaged in a contest with an "evil spirit" variously known as *Gaua*, *Khauna*, or *Gauna*. He is the destroyer, the one who sends bad luck and disease, and is ever on the look-out to injure people. The Bushmen invoke the aid of *Thora* to defeat his attempts to injure them. He sends the thunderstorm and the lightning, of which the people are very much afraid; they will mutter to themselves, *Khauna ka rue ie ie*, "Khauna leave us alone." They look upon the lightning as his offspring, nor will they kill the lightning bird or hammerkop (*Scopus umbretta*) or rob its nest if they can help it. "Once in the company of a Bushman," says Dornan, "I wanted to shoot one of these birds, but he said it would be bad, and that Khauna would not like it, so I desisted." If a person is struck by lightning, he is supposed to have got in the way of the lightning bird when trying to rob its nest. "The religion of the Kalahari Bushmen," concludes Dornan, "is thus a kind of dualism in which two powers, one good, Thora or Huwe, and one bad, Khauna, are engaged in a struggle for the mastery."[3]

The word *Gauna* (*//gauwa*), finally, crops up again among the

[1] Op. cit., 410.
[2] Op. cit., 410–11.
[3] *Pygmies and Bushmen*, 150, 153, 167–8.

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Nama. Nama influence is seen also in the word *Heiseb* found among the Heikum of the Etosha Pan and of North-East Ondonga. This is one of the names applied to the mythical hero more commonly known as *Heitsi Eibib*, who figures so prominently in the religious system of the Nama. Its absence from the other Bushman tribes is clearly suggestive, although the name *Hishe* found among the Naron and Auen may possibly be a corruption of it. The various current interpretations of *//gaua* as "the evil being", "the devil" or "Satan" must likewise be dismissed as alien to native Bushman ideas. The word has been widely used by missionaries among the Nama for "Devil", and there can be little doubt that it is ultimately from this source that such interpretations have been derived.

All these direct symptoms of borrowing from other peoples show clearly that the religious conceptions of the Northern Bushmen as recorded above can by no means be regarded as untainted by foreign influences. The final interpretation of these conceptions will therefore have to take into account the religious ideas of the neighbouring peoples as well, especially of the Nama, in order that a full basis for discussion may be obtained. This is all the more necessary since the information relating to them as now held by the Bushmen is hardly sufficient to enable us to determine satisfactorily the full meaning attached to them by the people, to determine, that is, what part they really play in native life. For the moment, however, it may be of service if we attempt to reduce to some order the various accounts given by our authorities of these conceptions.

A general survey of the attributes said to be vested in the different beings figuring in the religion and mythology of the Northern Bushmen seems to show that on the whole we have to deal with two main conceptions. There is in the first place the conception known variously to the North-Western Bushmen as *Huwe*, *Xu*, *Xuwa*, *Hishe*, or *Erob*, and to the North-Eastern Bushmen as *Thora* or *Huwe*. By Lebzelter, whose account cannot be entirely freed from a suspicion of prejudice in favour of the monotheistic doctrine associated with the name of Pater W. Schmidt and his school of disciples, *Xu* or *Erob* is spoken of as an anthropomorphic "supreme good being" dwelling in a house in the sky, where he receives the souls of the dead. He is regarded as the creator; he controls the rain and its associated phenomena of thunder and lightning, and punishes evil-doers with lightning; he sends good fortune in hunting and in the collection of veldkos, is prayed to before and after hunting, and is

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776 honoured with certain ritual observances connected with the chase;
[782] he is also prayed to for rain, before travel, and in case of illness;
[224] and finally it is from him that the magicians obtain their special
[756] powers. By the Eastern Kung he is said to have a wife and many children; among the other Kung and the Heikum he figures alone.

184 Few of these attributes are mentioned by Miss Bleek in her remarks
776 upon *Hishe* among the Naron and Auen, and upon *Huwe* among the !O !Kung. But there are certain points of agreement. *Hishe* dwells in
[775] a house in the east, to which the ghosts of the dead repair by day;
[224] he is regarded as the creator, and as the protector of game and hunting.
On the other hand *Hishe-Huwe*, sometimes alone, sometimes in double
[881] guise as man and woman, sometimes "followed by children like
[114] baboons", figures prominently in the boys' puberty ceremonies, which are not referred to at all by Lebzelter. At the same time, since these ceremonies certainly have much to do with hunting, their association with *Hishe-Huwe* is not inconsistent with his character as protector of the game and hunting, although of course it is hardly likely that this provides the only explanation for his figuring in them. Nor
[782] is he ever prayed to among these tribes, save where the name *Huwe* is substituted by the !O !Kung for *//nwa-se*, the New Moon, in the prayer for rain. Most of the prayers for food and rain, however, are directed to the heavenly bodies, especially the Moon.

A closer agreement with Lebzelter's account is provided by Dornan's
[114] discussion of *Thora-Huwe* among the North-Eastern Bushmen.
Thora is here said to be the creator who is over all things, he sends
[821] rain and game, plenty of food and good luck in hunting, certain
[224] hunting observances are directed towards him, he wards off disease,
[753] and protects the Bushmen from danger.

It is possible also to find a connection in certain respects between *Huwe* and the conception of the Mantis among the Southern Bushmen. Among the Cape Bushmen, it is true, the Mantis is primarily a mythological character, the central figure of an elaborate series of myths
[782] relating to him and his "family". He is never worshipped, but on the other hand, like *Huwe*, he has creative powers, and is also said to
[825] have made certain bucks and to protect them. Mention is further
[775] made by these Bushmen of an afterworld to which go the spirits of the dead, but there is nothing at all to link this up with the Mantis, just as there is nothing to link up the afterworld of the North-Eastern Bushmen with *Thora*. The resemblance between the Mantis and *Huwe* is far more noticeable among the Bushmen of Basutoland.

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Here also the Mantis is the central figure of many myths; but at the same time he is the creator, he causes life or death, he is especially concerned with the sources of food supply, so that prayers are addressed to him for food and good luck in hunting, and he is also connected with certain religious dances at which the "initiated men" (probably the magicians) cure illness. The elaborate mythological character of the Mantis among the Southern Bushmen and his association with so many other figures in these myths preclude an absolute identification of him and *Huwe*. The resemblance in other respects, however, appears on the whole to be striking enough to warrant our connecting the two.

The other outstanding conception is that of *//gaua*, *//gauab*, */gamab*, etc. In all the North-Western tribes the word *//gaua* is used in the first place for the ghosts of dead persons, and one cannot resist assuming that this is its fundamental significance. Among the Naron and Auen these ghosts, which as in all the other North-Western tribes can be seen by the magicians, walk about at night, and people are afraid of them, but not do expect real harm from them; among the Eastern Kung, however, all the *//gauab* are the cause of illness, some do mischief, while others come down to earth to steal the souls of the dead; among the Heikum of Ukuambi the ghosts move about on earth and do harm to people, while among the Heikum of the Etosha Pan the soul goes to live with */gamab*, but may return to earth to kill people. In general therefore it would seem that dead people are regarded by the North-Western Bushmen as sources of injury, and especially as causing illness and even death. The same idea is conveyed by Dornan's statement, that the North-Eastern Bushmen avoid the grave of a dead person, "lest the spirit resent the intrusion."

The word *//gaua* is, however, used also in the sense of a personified being, whose attributes differ slightly from tribe to tribe, but appear on closer analysis to show a certain uniformity. The !O Kung ascribe thunder and lightning to *//gaua*; when anyone is killed by lightning they say "*//gaua* took him", and people who had met their death in this way were said to sit in the sky as stars, which are looked upon as "*//gaua*'s fires". Among the Eastern Kung the stars are also the fires of the *//gauab*, a shooting star heralds the death of someone, while lightning is the medium through which *Xu* punishes or kills people. Among the Heikum of North-East Ondonga *xamaba* (*/gamab*) inflicts illness upon people whom he does not like, while

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184 776 [821] among the Heikum of the Etosha Pan */gamab* makes thunder and lightning, the stars are his fire, and he kills people by means of shooting stars. The Naron and Auen term a strong and howling wind *//gaua*, [825] while sometimes *//gaua* is said to be a bird which makes the wind. [777] [753] [821] [825] Finally among the North-Eastern Bushmen *Khauna* is the source of bad luck and disease, is injurious to people, and sends the thunderstorm and lightning, the latter being regarded as his offspring. Further the "lightning bird", intimately associated with him, is feared and may inflict death by lightning when molested. Here again we get [753] the general impression of *//gaua* as the source of illness and death, acting through the medium of the storm, lightning, and shooting stars.

184 776 821 In all this *//gaua* offers certain points of resemblance with the conception of the Rain held by the Cape Bushmen. Among the latter the Rain is definitely personified, it appears in their myths as a supernatural personage, generally in the form of an animal, and here it is said, "the Rain thunders, the Rain lightens." When the Rain is angry with anyone, people may be carried off in a whirlwind and various transformations effected; the howling of the wind forebodes evil; and numerous observances have to be kept in order [761] not to anger the Rain and thereby provoke death. There is also [775] the belief that people killed by lightning are changed into stars; shooting stars are omens of death; the wind is sometimes spoken [825] of as a bird; and the flight over the camp of the *Scopus umbretta*, known to the North-Eastern Bushmen as the "lightning bird", here announces the death of someone. In this connection it may be added that among the Namib Bushmen thunder and lightning are said to command great reverence, and a person struck and killed by lightning is believed to have suffered death as a punishment for some past misdeed.[1]

184 776 In some cases, among the North-Western Bushmen, *//gaua* shares certain of the attributes vested in *Huwe*. This appears most strikingly among the Heikum of North-East Ondonga, where *Huwe-Erob* does not figure at all, his place being taken by *xamaba*, who has most of the powers and privileges attributed to *Huwe-Erob* by the other [782] Heikum and the Kung. Among the Heikum of the Etosha Pan [755] we find prayers addressed to *Erob* for rain and in illness, but at the [775] same time the "demiurge" */gamab* is mentioned as the creator who [821] receives the souls of the dead. Further, as we have just seen, */gamab*

[1] Seydel, "Aus der Namib," 304.

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makes thunder and lightning, the stars are his fire, and he kills people by means of shooting stars. Finally, among the Eastern Kung, */nawa* or the chief of the *//gauab* figures as the creator, and, as the executive of *Xu*, he is the source of good luck in hunting and is honoured with the first-offerings of the chase and prayers for success; he is also, however, most frequently the cause of illness. It seems extremely probable that in all these cases the conceptions of *Huwe* on the one hand and of *//gaua* on the other have been blended or confused; they are sufficiently distinct in other respects to make this assumption appear not entirely groundless. The same explanation may be advanced for the conflicting reports given by Miss Bleek and by Fourie of one important feature in the Auen puberty ceremonies for boys: according to the former, it is *Hishe* who figures in the special dances, while the latter states that this function is fulfilled by *Gaua*. *//gaua*, it will be remembered, also presides at a girl's puberty dance among the !O Kung. Whether we have here a similar confusion is uncertain, since in none of the other Bushman tribes do the supernatural beings figure in these ceremonies for girls. But a suggestion that this may be the case is conveyed by the fact that one of Miss Bleek's informants identified *//gaua* with *Ndzambi*, the Mbunda (Bantu) word for deity, used by the missionaries for "God", while another spoke of *//gaua* as the "father" of the Bushmen.

We are left, therefore, with the conception of *Huwe*, *Thora*, or the Mantis (among the Basutoland Bushmen) as the creator, the source of the beneficent rain and of good luck in hunting and food gathering, and the protector of his people from illness and danger; and with the conception of *//gaua* first as the ghosts of the dead and then as a personified being, in both cases the source of illness and death, inflicted in the latter case through the medium of thunder, lightning, shooting stars, etc. This analysis is not advanced as an interpretation of the meaning of these beings, nor does it ignore the possibility of elements having been borrowed from other peoples; it is intended merely to summarize briefly what appear to be from the accounts of our authorities the principal religious conceptions common to most of the Bushmen of the present time.

Magic and Magicians

In all the Bushman tribes people are found who deal in the mysterious or supernatural, who are regarded as endowed with

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supernatural powers, or who are able to control, either for social purposes or for their own ends, the spiritual forces upon which the social welfare depends. There is no English word which adequately describes them, but such persons may be loosely termed magicians.

Among the Cape Bushmen, these magicians, who might be of either sex, were called */gixa* (plural, */giten*). There is unfortunately no information available as to how they acquired their powers, nor have we any clear description of the part they played in the life of the community. A few details about them may, however, be gathered from the texts collected by Bleek and Lloyd. Some magicians were rainmakers, who went out to catch the rain bull and lead it over the land bringing rain. Others, again, had special powers over particular game animals, such as the springbok or the ostrich. Some magicians were able to assume and go about in the form of animals such as the lion, springbok, jackal, or a little bird; others, even when asleep, knew what was going about at night, and took care of the people, defending them from evil magicians. For some magicians could cause illness by shooting with invisible arrows, and the patients would die, even though doctored; while some were said to eat the flesh of the dead. When a magician died an earthquake took place, and his heart fell, as a shooting star, out of the sky into a waterhole. His powers, however, he continued to possess even after death, for there are mentioned several occasions on which a dead rain-maker was asked to send rain or a game magician to give success in hunting.[1]

These beliefs, fragmentary as they are, show definitely that the magicians were held to possess supernatural powers, which they might use for good or evil; but, apart perhaps from the making of rain, there is nothing to link them up with any cult or public ceremony, or to indicate that they ever played the part of priests.

Among the Naron and Auen, however, the magicians, as we have seen, function at the puberty ceremonies. They introduce *Hishe* into the dances, and make the cuts between the eyebrows of the boys. Among the Naron they are also the priests, who pray to the New Moon for rain; while among the Auen they make rain by sprinkling on the ground a kind of red earth, which they fetch from afar and carry about with them. The magicians, both male and female, are

[1] Bleek, *Bushman Texts*, 18; Lloyd, *Bushman Material Collected*, 22.

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faculty of seeing and speaking to the *//gauab*, and only they know and utter the real name, */nawa*, of the chief of the latter. The evening before a hunting expedition they pray to *//gauab* for help, and certain of them also have the power of conjuring down rain. This they achieve in the following manner. When rain is needed, all the people of the camp take part in a dance, during which they sing over and over again a mournful song lamenting the condition of hunger and thirst to which they are reduced. "Finally the great captain in the sky hears the lamentation. The magician goes outside the camp and sees that a thin cord is being let down from the sky. He climbs a certain way up this, but the great captain comes down to meet him half-way. As soon as the magician sees the great captain, he throws a powder up to him; whereupon the great captain lifts him up high and takes him into his house. There the magician prays to him: 'Lord, help us, the children are dying, we thirst and hunger.' So long does he pray and plead that at last the captain says: 'It is well, I shall send water, that the children may have water and veldkos.' Then he again accompanies the magician half-way down the cord. As soon as the latter has reached the ground, he releases his hold upon the cord, which is at once drawn up again. The rain follows immediately."[1]

Among the !O Kung in Angola there are also two kinds of magicians. The */num-k'au* officiates at puberty dances, makes scarifications, sees spirits, and also conjures up *//gaua*, while the *tsho-k'au* heals the sick by singing, dancing, and extracting the evil from the patient's body through sucking. For this he receives a present. Both men and women apparently can become magicians of either kind, if taught by an older practitioner. There is said to be no ceremony of initiation for them, nor do they wear a special dress of any kind.[2]

It will be noticed that both terms which distinguish the two classes of magician among the Kung and the !O Kung are also found among the Naron and Auen for magicians. This would suggest that there is a similar division of functions in these tribes also, but neither Miss Bleek nor Kaufmann definitely states this.

The origin of magic among the Naron and Auen is said by Fourie to be attributed to *//gaua*, and he gives the following myth in confirmation.[3] "The Bushman *Tji-Tji* is said to have been initiated

[1] Lebzelter, "Religiösen Vorstellungen usw.," 408–9; *idem*, "Bei den !Kun-Buschleuten," 15.
[2] D. F. Bleek, "Buschmänner von Angola," 55; "Bushmen of Central Angola," 124.
[3] "Bushmen of S.W.A.," 104.

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184 805 The Naron have three seasons: spring, when the birds mate and the first flowers come, from about August to October; summer, when it is hot and the rain falls, or is expected, from November to March; and winter, or the cold time, from April to July. The !O Kung also have three seasons: the cold dry time from about April to September, the first rains from then to about November, and the real rainy season from about December to March or April. The Auen, Kung, and Heikum, on the other hand, distinguish four seasons: the cold dry season (winter), the small or first rainy season (early spring), the hot, dry season (spring and early summer), and the big or second rainy season (late summer). When all the seasons have passed, a year is finished; but there is no clear conception of the year as a period of time, nor do they reckon in years. Mothers can tell in which season their babies were born, and for three or four years know how many seasons ago it was, but after that they get confused. Hence, for instance, no person knows his positive age, although his comparative age as regards the other members of the family is always well established.[1]

184 805 821 The Naron observe the sun sufficiently to know that it makes a shorter path in winter than in summer, but apparently the stars foretell the coming of the seasons better. When the Pleiades rise just before dawn, the cold is due; when they come before midnight, spring is at hand. Besides the Pleiades the Naron also have names for the Southern Cross, Orion, the Milky Way, and the Great Bear, which is just visible at Sandfontein; and they know when each constellation will rise and set in the different seasons.[2]

184 821 The other North-Western Bushmen apparently take no special interest in the stars. The !O Kung, for instance, as we have seen, speak of all the stars as *//gaua*'s fires, and have no separate names for any of them; and the same seems to be true of the Kung and Heikum. The Cape Bushmen, on the other hand, were close observers of the movements of the stars and constellations, and had names for a great many of them. Thus Archernar is the "Star-digging-stick's stone" or the "Digging-stick's stone of Canopus", while Canopus itself is the "Bushman's rice star"; the Pointers to the Southern Cross are male lions; α, β, and γ Crucis are lionesses; Aldebaran is a male hartebeest, and Orion is a female hartebeest; Procyon a male

[1] D. F. Bleek, *Comparative Vocabularies*, passim; *idem*, "Bushmen of Central Angola," 110; *idem*, *Naron*, 39; Kaufmann, "Die Auin," 160; Fourie, "Bushmen of S.W.A.," 99.
[2] D. F. Bleek, *Naron*, loc. cit.

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eland, Castor and Pollux his wives; the Magellanic Clouds a steenbok; Orion's sword three male tortoises hung upon a stick, his belt three female tortoises so hung, etc. As these names indicate, there is a good deal of folklore centring in the stars, and indeed a considerable part of the vast collections of Cape Bushman lore made by Bleek and Lloyd relate to the heavenly bodies, which are regarded as once having been men or animals before being transformed into their present state. In one tale, for instance, it is related that a girl of the early race (preceding the Bushmen) wished for a little light, so that the people might see to return home by night. She therefore threw wood-ashes into the sky and these became the Milky Way. In another, again, it is told how a girl, at the time of her puberty seclusion, saw some people eating together at a dassie's house of branches. As a result they and the house, fixed by her looks, became stars in the sky, where they are now to be seen as the Corona Australis.[1]

The Hiechware of the Eastern Kalahari, according to Dornan, also "have considerable acquaintance with various groups or prominent stars, and have names for them", but the only one mentioned by him is the Southern Cross, referred to as the "giraffe star" and said to be somewhat like this animal in appearance.[2]

For shorter lengths of time the Bushmen go by the Moon, but they make no attempt to reckon how many moons there are in the year or in a season.[3] They observe the phases of the Moon closely, but seem to have no division of time into anything corresponding to weeks, although they readily pick up the European system of weeks when working for white people, and will come regularly on the seventh day for tobacco, etc. Otherwise, in their intercourse with white people, the wage, if not given daily, is demanded at the New Moon.[4]

The day is apparently divided according to the position of the sun, but no names have been recorded for any fixed divisions or parts of the day.

The notion of time is also used to indicate distance, for which there are no special units. Generally distance is reckoned by the time it

[1] Bleek, *Bushman Texts*, 10 sq.
[2] *Pygmies and Bushmen*, 165.
[3] Lebzelter says, however ("Bei den !Kuñ-Buschleuten," 15) that the Eastern Kung have a "vegetation year" of 10 months. The year is reckoned from one veldkos harvest to another. He omits to give any further details.
[4] D. F. Bleek, *Naron*, loc. cit.; *idem*, "Bushmen of Central Angola," loc. cit.; Kaufmann, loc. cit.

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turned back with cattle and all to the BeChwana, by whom they were murdered with assegais."[1] A thoroughly convincing proof!

Appendix

Comparative Note on Bushmen and Hottentot Religion

The analysis given above of Hottentot religious conceptions shows that in many respects they bear a striking resemblance to those of the Bushmen, although there are also considerable differences. Both peoples worship the Moon. The Southern Bushmen also have prayers to the sun and to various stars, which the Hottentots and most of the Northern Bushmen have not, but even here the worship of the Moon is far more developed than that of the other celestial bodies. This common feature is all the more significant since none of the Bantu peoples of South Africa pray to the Moon.

Neither Bushmen nor Hottentots, again, have any organized family or tribal ancestor worship, nor any form of religious practice in which the spirits of the dead are regularly invoked or propitiated, although among the Southern Bushmen as well as among the Hottentots dead people are occasionally prayed to. In the beliefs of both peoples the dead are in some way connected with the stars, but it is held above all that dead people become mischievous ghosts, which in particular are the cause of sickness and death. Both the Northern Bushmen and the Hottentots use some form of the word *//gaua* for these ghosts, although the Hottentots customarily speak of them as */hei /nun* and by certain other names as well. Among both peoples, moreover, the magicians are somehow in special contact with the ghosts, and consequently have the power to cure the illness caused by them. Certain of the North-Western Bushmen, however, believe also that the soul of a dead person, as distinguished from his ghost, goes to live with the being *Huwe* in a house in the sky, while the Southern Bushmen likewise speak of an afterworld to which dead people go, without, however, associating this afterworld with any supernatural being. These beliefs are apparently not found at all among the Hottentots.

Both the Northern Bushmen and the Hottentots further use the word *//Gaua* as the name of a definitely personified being, closely connected with the ghosts of the dead. But here there is also a difference. The Hottentots regard *//Gaunab* primarily as an evil being,

[1] Op. cit., 122.

who causes sickness or death. The Northern Bushmen likewise believe that he causes death, but do not seem to attach any special significance of evil to him, save where there has been Hottentot influence. He is associated by them more particularly with certain phenomena of nature, such as thunder and lightning, shooting stars, the wind, etc., so that Miss Bleek actually regards him as a personification of the wind and the storm, while Pater Schmidt looks upon him as an ancient sky god ("Himmelsgott").[1] Closer analysis shows, however, that the phenomena of nature regarded as manifestations of *//Gaua* by the Northern Bushmen are all looked upon primarily as mediums through which he inflicts misfortune and death; and similarly we find that among the Hottentots the whirlwind, the eclipse of the moon and the sun, the rainbow and the Aurora australis are all natural phenomena of ill omen specially connected with *//Gaunab*. Since the lightning is actually a frequent cause of death, while the other phenomena, such as comets, shooting stars and eclipses, are owing to their very nature readily regarded as ominous, it is perhaps not far-fetched to see in this the reason why they should have become specially connected with *//Gaua*, the cause of sickness and death.

The impression one gets, reviewing the evidence as a whole, is that among both the Hottentots and the Northern Bushmen the term *//Gaua* has several different references, which, however, are not consistently distinguished by the people themselves. Sometimes it is used for the ghost of a dead person, sometimes as a collective name for these ghosts, sometimes, again, in the sense of a personified being with various special attributes. The beliefs regarding *//Gaua*, in other words, are not crystallized into clear-cut conceptions, but are vague, inconsistent, and ambiguous. Consequently those interpretations based solely upon the conception of *//Gaua* as a personified being must be rejected as one-sided and obviously inadequate. If any special interpretation is to be sought, and in the light of our present knowledge there is none which can be advanced with full confidence, the most fruitful approach would seem to be that *//Gaua* must be regarded as a vague conception founded upon the beliefs about the fate of the dead and the ways in which the latter can affect the living society.

//Gaunab in Hottentot mythology is in conflict with *Tsui //Goab*, the creator, the guardian of health, the source of prosperity and

[1] D. F. Bleek, "Bushmen of Central Angola," 124; W. Schmidt, "Die alte Buschmann-Religion," 295.

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abundance, and above all the controller of the rain and its associated phenomena of clouds, thunder, and lightning. *Tsui //Goab* appears to be essentially the personification of the natural forces producing the rain, and as the rain god he is the object of a special cult. In all this he resembles closely the being variously known as *Huwe*, *Hishe*, *Erôb* or *Thora* by the Northern Bushmen, and as *Cagn*, the Mantis, by the Bushmen of Basutoland. *Huwe*, too, is the creator, he controls the rain, thunder, and lightning, he is the source of abundance and of good luck in hunting, the protector of his people from illness and danger, and to him are directed the ceremonies and prayers for rain, food, recovery from illness, etc.

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But among certain of the North-Western Bushmen *Huwe* also dwells in a house in the sky where he receives the souls of the dead. This belief is apparently not found at all among the Hottentots, nor has it been recorded of the other Bushman tribes. It is also held, however, in what appears to be a far more elaborate form, by the Bergdama. Among this people we meet with the conception of *//Gamab*, whose name Vedder derives from the root *//gami*, " water, " and whom he regards as " originally the god of the rising clouds and of thunder and fountains ". *//Gamab* is the only supernatural being of whom the Bergdama speak. He is the source of life and death, abundance of food, etc., and he lives in " heaven " in a village where he gathers about him the souls of the departed. The Bergdama trace out in great detail the movements of the soul from the moment of death till its arrival in *//Gamab's* village, and the life led there is minutely described.[1] In view of the fact that this particular series of beliefs and its associated rites appear to be the central feature of Bergdama religion, are entirely absent from the Hottentots, and occur in a much-attenuated form only among certain North-Western Bushman tribes who have been much in contact with the Bergdama, one feels justified in assuming that the connection of *Huwe* with a " sky dwelling " to which go the souls of the deceased can be definitely attributed to Bergdama influence.

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Among the North-Western Bushmen *Huwe* also figures in the boys' puberty ceremonies, whereas among the Hottentots neither *Tsui //Goab* nor any other supernatural being is in any way connected with these ceremonies. Here we have an important distinction, and one which must further be correlated with the fact that the Southern Bushmen do not appear to have any puberty ceremonies at all for

[1] Vedder, *Die Bergdama*, i, 97 sqq.; *idem*, " The Berg Damara," 61 sqq.